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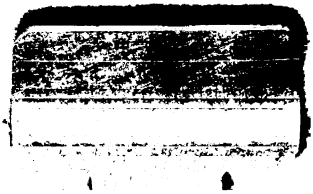

THE MOST PLEASANT

SONG

OF

LADY BESSY,

THE ELDEST DAUGHTER OF KING EDWARD THE FOURTH;

AND HOW SHE MARRIED KING HENRY THE SEVENTH
OF THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER.

WITH NOTES

BY THOMAS HEYWOOD, F.A.S.

..... Sermones ego mallem
Repentes per humum.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY RICHARD TAYLOR,
RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET.

MDCCCXXIX.

929
M915
1829

TO

THE REVEREND JOSEPH HUNTER, F.A.S.

THIS BOOK

IS DEDICATED,

AS A MARK OF RESPECT AND FRIENDSHIP.

Manchester,
January 1, 1829.

030

PREFACE.

THE following "SONG" is copied from a Manuscript in the possession of William Bateman, Esq. F.A.S. The hand-writing is of the reign of Charles the Second; the composition was probably coëval with the events it describes. The transcriber has enacted the part of translator; but the necessity for preserving the metre has compelled him to leave sufficient proofs of the age in which the poem was written. The words "commentie," "meany," "blee," "gawres," "cou'd," "liart" (gentle), and many others, but ill assort with the modern phraseology into which the ballad is for the most part rendered; whilst the manners described have nothing in common with those which obtained during the seventeenth century. The manuscript is a very slovenly performance; and notwithstanding the corrections of a cotemporary, several unintelligible passages remain, to mark the incompetency of the copyist and

of his reviser, to the task which they had undertaken.

The author betrays himself in various places (by inadvertently changing from the third person to the first) to be Humphry Brereton, one of the household of Thomas second Lord Stanley; and with Bray, Urswick, and others, employed in the negociations which preceded the return of Richmond.

The porter then in that state
That time of the night riseth he,
And forthwith opened me the gate,
And received both my horse and me.
Humphrey took the three mules then,
Into the West wind wou'd he,
Without all doubt at Liverpoole
He took shipping upon the sea.
With a swift wind and a liart
He so saild upon the sea,
To Beggrames Abbey in little Brittain,
Where as the English prince did lie.
The porter was a Cheshire man,
Well he knew Humphrey when he him see.
Humphrey knockt at the gate truely,
Where as the porter stood it by,
And welcomed me full heartily,
And received then my mules three.

The spelling Bosworth uniformly as Bolesworth, might have induced a suspicion that the author was better acquainted with the county of Chester than with that of Leicester; but the mode in which the porter accounts for his pleasure in seeing Humphry, enables us to form a probable conjecture as to the family of the ballad writer:

> For a Cheshire man born am I certain,
> From the Malpas but miles three.

In the pedigree of the Breretons of Shochlach and Malpas, (a younger branch of the house of the same name seated at Brereton,) Humphry appears to have been the third son of Bartholomew Brereton, and to have lived in the reign of Henry the Seventh. He left three daughters; the eldest of whom marrying into the neighbouring family of Dod of Edge, her descendants still exist in the representatives of that ancient house. Humphry is described in the Dod pedigree as seated at Grafton, a township near Malpas.

The immediate reference which the "Song" bears to some of the most important points in the controversy respecting the character of Richard the Third,

will probably in many instances cause the question of its antiquity to be decided according to the prejudices of the reader. The editor cannot expect that Humphry Brereton will meet with more consideration than that which Walpole and his followers have allotted to the cloud of cotemporary writers who are opposed to their view of this period of English history; and the honest Cheshire squire would probably be satisfied, if his labours in any degree multiplied the difficulties of those who have sought to injure the reputation of the gentle and unhappy lady it was his fortune to serve.

The "Lady Bessy" was the eldest daughter of Edward the Fourth, by the ill-omened marriage of that monarch with Lady Grey. The princess was born at Windsor, Feb. 11, 1466, and had therefore attained her nineteenth year at the time of which the ballad treats. The life of this lady partook of the unsettled character of the age. The success of Warwick, in the rebellion of which Edward's marriage was the cause, compelled the Queen with her children to take refuge in the sanctuary at Westminster. Four years afterwards the princess was

betrothed to the Dauphin: and Louis XI., in his anxiety to procure the withdrawal of the English army, promised to conduct the bride to France at his own expense, and to allow 60,000 livres per annum for her maintenance. This article of the treaty of Pequigny was however unperformed in 1480; and to the remonstrances of Lord Howard the French king replied by a direct refusal. Edward, who in anticipation of the nuptials had already styled his daughter "the Dauphiness," sought revenge in a war with Scotland, the ancient ally of France.

The name of the princess in connection with that of the Earl of Richmond first occurs in the negotiations between Edward the Fourth and Francis Duke of Brittany for the surrender of the Earl, who had taken refuge in that sovereign's dominions. The hand of Elizabeth was then offered to Richmond, but a fortunate chance enabled him to avoid putting the King's sincerity to the proof.

Edward died in April 1483; and the four following months saw the murder of Edward the Fifth and Richard Duke of York; whilst the Queen and

her children again went into sanctuary, and Richard Duke of Gloucester ascended the throne. The influential classes in the state were at this period divided into three parties: 1stly, The partisans of the House of York, who, either from attachment to the late king, or as being kinsman to the dowager queen, supported the young princess; 2ndly, The friends of the House of Lancaster; and 3rdly, That portion of the Yorkists, who, upholding the Duke of Gloucester, maintained the illegality of Edward's marriage, and the truth of the various propositions which Richard enunciated in vindication of his proceedings. The first party had been greatly weakened by the execution of Hastings, Rivers, and others of its leaders, when Morton bishop of Ely conceived the design of uniting those opposed to Richard by the marriage of the Earl of Richmond to the princess Elizabeth. The bishop was then a prisoner in the custody of the Duke of Buckingham, and zealously improved the opportunity of gaining his gaoler to the interests of Richmond. Buckingham was as thoughtless and choleric as the wily priest could have desired; and yet the readi-

ness of this nobleman to adventure both his person and estate in a rebellion against his ancient comrade, has induced a suspicion that he sought the crown for himself, and the hand of the princess for his son. Morton either suspected these intentions, or despaired of the result of the conspiracy; for no sooner was the Duke fairly set in motion, than his counsellor fled into Flanders.

A solemn oath was taken by the banished Earl on Christmas day 1483, at Rennes, to marry the princess; but Richard, fearing the parties thus uniting against him, had already prevailed upon his brother's widow to leave her sanctuary, and, with his nieces, to place herself under his care. It was the age of unnatural deeds; and whilst the facility with which the dowager queen betrayed that limited portion of the secrets of the Lancasterian party, which the prudent Margaret of Richmond had been compelled to reveal to her, may be passed over in the recollection of the punishment with which it was long afterwards visited,—yet her conduct in acquiescing to the union of her daughter with the man who had murdered her sons, it is im-

possible to palliate. The part taken by the "Lady Bessy," under these circumstances, has been variously represented. Buck, Walpole, Laing, and the vindicators of Richard, endeavour to show that the princess not only submitted to the addresses of her uncle, but actually grew impatient at the prolonged illness of Queen Anne. A passage in the Chronicle of Croyland, describing the appearance of Elizabeth in the same dress as the Queen at the court festivities during Christmas 1484, is supposed by Walpole to evince the desire which the princess had for the nuptials. The evidence of Buck is adduced as conclusive upon the subject. This writer states that he had seen a letter in the collection of the Earl of Arundel, in which the princess expresses impatience at the continued existence of Queen Anne, and is anxious to marry Richard. The allusion to this document would have been more satisfactory had the letter itself been given; but even admitting its existence, the fair construction to be placed upon the actions of the princess at this period is, that by the conduct of her mother she was forced into a situation where it was absolutely necessary to tem-

porize, and it may be remembered that even Margaret of Richmond appeared at court, and actually held up the train of the Queen. If Walpole's proposition be true, "that Richard seems to have had no intention of marrying his niece, but amused her with the hopes of that match to prevent her marrying Richmond," the princess may lay claim to the merit of acuteness in discovering his purpose, and of boldness in availing herself of the knowledge to render her condition less insupportable. Humphry Brereton joins his testimony to that of the cotemporary historians, in favour of "Lady Bessy;" and not content with describing her as the "puella reclamans" of Polydore Vergil, he shows that she was actively engaged on behalf of the banished Earl. If any thing be left to conjecture,—and with Walpole, Laing, &c. such a mode of argument ought to have great weight,—the Earl of Richmond in the twenty-seventh year of his age, and the avenger of the wrongs done to the family of Edward the Fourth, may be supposed to have been more agreeable to the "young Bessy," than the murderer of her brothers, at the mature age of forty-one.

Although the part taken by the princess in the correspondence with Richmond be hitherto unrecorded, yet it is well attested that her mother and Margaret countess of Richmond separately communicated with the Earl before Richard had won the former to his interest, and directed Lord Stanley to place the latter in confinement. "Lady Bessy" could not have been ignorant of proceedings in which she was so materially interested; and when others were prevented from carrying on the negotiations, is now shown to have adopted, and watched over them to a successful issue.

The subsequent fate of the princess is unconnected with this ballad. Upon the news of the descent of Richmond, she was sent with her cousin the Earl of Warwick to Sheriff Hutton, to be there confined. On the 18th of January 1486, Henry the Seventh, who disdained to rest his doubtful claim to the crown upon any other grounds than those of his Lancasterian descent and of his right by conquest, tardily redeemed his pledge to marry the "Lady Bessy." It was a match of policy; and the gentle and unoffending Queen, after a life ren-

dered miserable by the dislike in which the King held her in common with the whole of the House of York, and after having given birth to three sons and four daughters, died in the Tower, A.D. 1503, in the thirty-seventh year of her age, and lies buried with her husband at Westminster.

"For her great vertue," says Hall, "this noble princess was commonly called the good Quene Elizabeth." "And as this victory," writes Lord Bacon in the History of King Henry VII. "gave him the knee, so his purpose of marriage with the Lady Elizabeth gave him the heart; so that both knee and heart did truly bow before him." It was doubtless a solid ground of popularity to be the means of bringing to a termination "York's and Lancaster's long jars:" but we are willing to believe that the personal carriage, as well as the accident of situation, justified the regard in which this lady was held. We find her name connected with that of the venerable Margaret of Richmond in the publication of a book of devotion; and there is one of her letters in the fifth volume of the Paston Correspondence, which deserves the panegyric bestowed upon it by

the editor,—of being the production of an open and generous mind.

In person "Lady Bessy" must have been very attractive; and in looking at the sweet feminine expression of her portrait, we both marvel and regret that such an one was ever the bride of the cold-hearted and selfish Henry Tudor.

THE MOST PLEASANT

SONG

OF

LADY BESSY,

THE ELDEST DAUGHTER OF KING EDWARD THE FOURTH;

AND HOW SHE MARRIED KING HENRY THE SEVENTH

OF THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER.

FOR Jesus sake be merry and glad,
Be blythe of blood of bone and blé,
And of your words be sober and sad,
And a litle while listen to me:
I shall you tell how Lady Bessy made her moan,
And down she kneeled upon her knee
Before the Earle of Darby her self alone,
These were her words fair and free:—
Who was your beginner, who was your ground,
Good father Stanley, will you tell me?
Who married you to the Margaret Richmond,
A Dutchess of a high degree;
And your son the Lord George Strange,
By that good Lady you had him by.

And Harden Lands under your hands,
And Moules Dale also under your fee,
Your brother Sir William Stanley by parliament,
The Holt Castle who gave him truely?
Who gave him Brome-field, that I now ment?
Who gave him Chirk-land to his fee?
Who made him High Chamberlain of Cheshire?
Of that countrey farr and near,
They were all wholly at his desire,
When he did call they did appear,
And also the Forrest of Delameer,
To hunt therein both day and night,
As often as his pleasure were,
And to send for Baron and Knight;
Who made thé Knight and Lord of all,
Good father Stanley, remember thee?—
It was my father that King royall,
He set you in that room so high.
Remember Richmond banished full bare
And lyeth in Brittain behind the sea;
You may recover him of his care,
If your heart and mind to him will gree,
Let him come home and claim his right,
And let us cry him King Henry.
And if you will mantain him with might,
In Brittain he needeth not long to tarry.
Go away, Bessy, the Lord said then,
I tell thee now for certainty,

That fair words oft make fooles full faine,
When they be but found vain glory.—
  Oh father Stanley, to you I call,
For the love of God remember thee,
Since my father King Edward, that King royall,
At Westminster on his death bed lee,
He called to him my unckle Richard,
So he did Robert of Brakenbury,
And James Terrill he was the third;
He sent them to Ludlow in the West Countrey
To fetch the Duke of York and the Duke of Clarence,
These two Lords born of a high degree;
The Duke of York shoud have been Prince
And King after my father free;
But a balle-full game was then among,
When they doomed these two Lords to dye:
They had neither justice nor right, but had great wrong,
Alack! it was the more pitty.
Neither were they burried in St. Maries,
In church or church-yard, or holy place;
Alas! they had dolefull destines,
Hard was their chance, worse was their disgrace:
Therefore help, good father Stanley, while you have space,
For the love of God and mild Mary,
Or else in time to come you shall, alas!
Remember the words of Lady Bessy.
  Good lady Bessy, be content,
For tho' your words be never so sweet,

If King Richard knew, you must be shent,
And perchance cast into prison deep;
Then had you cause to waile and weep
And wring your hands with heavy chear;
Therefore, good Lady, I you beseek
To move me no more in this mattér.
Oh good father Stanley, listen now and hear;
Heare is no more but you and I:
King Edward that was my father dear,
On whose estate God had mercy,
In Westminster as he did stand
On a certain day in a study,
A book of reason he had in his hand,
And so sore his study he did apply,
That his tender tears fell on the ground,
All men might see that stood him by;
There were both Earls and Lords of land
But none of them durst speak but I.
I came before my father the King,
And kneeled down upon my knee;
I desired him lowly of his blessing,
And full soon he gave it unto me:
And in his arms he coud me thring,
And set me in a window so high;
He spake to me full sore weeping;
These were the words he said to me:
Daughter, as thou wilt have my blessing,
Do as I shall councell thee;

And to my words give good listning,
For one day they may pleasure thee:
Here is a book of reason; keep it well,
As you will have the love of me;
Neither to any creature do it tell,
Nor let no liveing Lord it see,
Except it be to the Lord Stanley
The which I love full heartiley:—
All the matter to him shew you may,
For he and his thy help must be;
As soon as the truth to him is shown,
Unto your words he will agree;
For their shall never son of my body begotten
That shall be crowned after me;
But you shall be Queen and wear the crown,
So doth expresse the prophecye.
He gave me tax and toland,
And also diamonds to my degree,
To gett me a Prince when it pleaseth Christ;
The world is not as it will be,
Therefore, good father Stanley, grant my request
For the love of God I desire thee;
All is at your commandment down in the west
Both Knight and Squire and the Commentie;
You may choose then where you like best,
I have enough both of gold and fee;
I want nothing but the strength of men,
And good captains two or three.

Go away, Bessy, the Lord said then;
To this will I never agree,
For women oft time cannot faine;
These words they be but vain glory;
For, and I shoud treason begin
Against King Richard his royalty,
In every street within London
The Eagle's foot shoud be pulled down,
And as yet in his great favour I am,
But then shoud I loose my great renowne,
I shoud be called traitor thro' the same
Full soon in every markett towne,
That were great shame to me and my name,
I had rather spend ten thousand pounde.
Oh father Stanley, to you I make my moane;
For the love of God remember thee;
It is not three days past and gone
Since my unckle Richard sent after me
A Batchelor, and a bold Baron,
A Doctor of Divinitye,
And bad that I shoud to his chamber gone;
His love and his leman that I shoud bee;
And the Queen that was his wedded feere
He would her poyson and putt away
So woud he his son and his heir;
Christ knoweth he is a proper boy.
Yet had I rather burn in a tunne
On the Tower Hill that is so high,

Or that I woud to his chamber come;
His love and his leman will I not be,
I had rather be draw'n with wild horses five
Through every street of that citty,
Or that good woman shoud loose her life,
Good father, for the love of mee.
I am his brother's daughter dear;
He is my uncle, it is no nay;
Or ever I woud be his wedded feer
With sharp swords I will me slay;
At his biding if I were then,
And follow'd also his cruel intent,
I were well worthy to suffer pain
And in a fire for to be brent.
Therefore, good father Stanley, some pitty take
On the Earle Richmond and me,
And the rather for my father's sake
Which gave thee the Ile of Man so free;
He crowned thé with a crown of lead,
He holpe thé first to that degree,
He set thee the crown upon thy head,
And made thee the lord of that countrey;
That time you promised my father dear
To him to be both true and just,
And now you stand in a disweare,
Oh Jesu Christ, who may men trust!
O good Lady, I say againe
Your fair words shall never move my mind;

King Richard is my Lord and Sov'raign,
To him I will never be unkind.
I will serve him truely till I dye;
I will him take as I him find;
For he hath given to mine and me,
His bounteous gift do me so bind.
Yet, good father Stanley, remember thee,
As I have said so shall it prove,
If he of this gift be soe free,
It is for fear and not for love:
For if he may to his purpose come,
You shall not live these years three,
For these words to me he did once move;
In Sandall Castle underneath a tree:
He said, their shall no branch of the Eagle fly
Within England, neither far nor nigh;
Nor none of the Talbots to run him by,
Nor none of their lineage to the ninth degree,
But he woud them either hang or head,
And that he swear full grievously.
Therefore help, gentle Lord, with all speed;
For when you woud fain it will not be.
Your Brother dwelleth in the Holt Castle;
A noble Knight forsooth is he;
All the Walsh-men love him well,
He may make a great company.
Sir John Savage is your sister's son;
He is well beloved within his shire,

A great company with him will come,
He will be ready at your desire.
Gilbert Talbott is a captain pure;
He will come with main and might;
To you he will be fast and sure
Against my uncle King and Knight.
Let us raise an host with him to fight;
Soon to the ground we shall him ding;
For God will stand ever with the right:
For he hath no right for to be king.
Go away, Bessy, the Lord can say;
Of these words, Bessy, now lett be;
I know King Richard woud not me betray
For all the gold in christantye.
I am his subject sworn to be true:
If I should seek treason to begin,
I and all mine full sore shoud rue,
For we were as like to loose as winn.
Beside that it were a deadly sin
To refuse my King and him betray:
The child is yet unborne that might moan in time
And think upon that woefull day.
Wherefore, good Lady, I do you pray
Keep all things close at your hart root;
So now farr past it is of the day
To move me more it is no boot.
Then from her head she cast her attire;
Her colour changed as pale as lead;

Her faxe that shóan as the gold wire
She tair it of besides her head,
And in a swoon down can she swye;
She spake not of a certain space.
The Lord had never so great pitty
As when he saw her in that case,
And his arms he can her embrace.
He was full sorry then for her sake;
The tears fell from his eyes apace;
But at the last these words she spake,
She said, To Christ my soul I betake;
For my body in Tem'ms drown'd shall be;
For I know my sorrow will never slake,
And my bones upon the sands shall lye:
The fishes shall feed upon me their fill.
This is a dolefull destinye:
And you may remedy this and you will.
Therefore the bone of my death I give to thee.
And ever she wept as she were woode.
The Earle on her had so great pitty
That her tender heart turned his mood.
He said, Stand up now, Lady Bessye,
As you think best I will agree.
Now I see the matter you do not faine,
I have thought in this matter as much as yee:
But it is hard to trust women;
For many a man is brought into great woe
Through telling to women his privity:

I trust you will not serve me so
For all the gold in christantie.
No, father, he is my mortall foe;
On him fain wrooken woud I bee;
He hath putt away my brethren two,
And I know he woud do so by me;
But my trust is in the Trinity;
Through your help we shall bale to him bring,
And such a day on him to see
That he and his full sore shall rue.
O Lady Bessye, the Lord can say,
Betwixt us both forcast we must
How we shall letters to Richmond convey.
No man to write I dare well trust;
For if he list to be unjust
And us betray to King Richard,
Then you and I are both lost;
Therefore of the scribe I am afraid.
You shall not need none such to call,
Good father Stanley, hearken to me:
What my father King Edward that King royall
Did for my sister my Lady Wells and me;
He sent for a scrivener to lusty London,
He was the best in that citty;
He taught us both to write and read full soon;
If it please you, full soon you shall see;
Lauded be God I had such speed
That I can write as well as he.

And alsoe indite and full well read,
And that (Lord) soon shall you see,
Both English and alsoe French
And also Spanish if you had need.
The Earle said, You are a proper wench;
Almighty Jesus be your speed,
And give us grace to proceed out
That we may letters soon convey
In secrett wise and out of doubt
To Richmond that lyeth beyond the sea.
We must depart, lady, the Earle said then;
Wherefore keep this matter secrettly,
And this same night betwixt nine and ten
In your chamber I think to be.
Look that you make all things ready;
Your maids shall not our councell hear,
For I will bring no man with me
But Humphrey Brereton my true esquire.
He took his leave of that Lady fair,
And to her chamber she went full tight
And for all things she did prepare,
Both pen and ink and paper white.
The Lord unto his study went
Forecasting with all his might
To bring to pass all his intent;
He took no rest till it was night,
And when the starrs shoone fair and bright
He him disguised in strange mannere.

He went unknown of any wyght
No more with him but his esquire,
And when he came her chamber near
Full privily there can he stand
To cause the lady to appeare.
He made a signe with his right hand;
And when the lady there him wist,
She was as glad as she might be—
Char-coals in chimneys there were cast,
Candles on sticks standing full high;
She opned the wickett and let him in,
And said Welcome, Lord and Knight soe free—
A rich chair was set for him,
And another for that fair Lady.
They ate the spice and drank the wine,
He had all things at his intent:
They rested them as for a time
And to their study then they went.
Then that lady so fair and free,
With rudd as red as rose in May,
She kneeled down upon her knee,
And to the lord thus can she say:
Good father Stanley, I you pray,
Now here is no more but you and I,
Let me know what you will say,
For pen and paper I have ready;—
He saith, Commend me to my son George Strange,
In Latham Castle there he doth lye,

When I parted with him, his heart did change;
From Latham to Manchester he road me by.
Upon Salford bridge I turned my horse againe,
My son George by the hand I hent:
I held so hard forsooth certaine
That his formest finger out of the joint went:
I hurt him sore he did complain:
These words to him then I did say;
Son, on my blessing, turn home againe,
This shall be a token another day;
Bid him come like a marchant of Farnfield,
Of Coopland or of Kendall wheather that it be,
And seven with him, and no more else,
For to bear him company.
Bid him lay away watch and ward,
And take no heed to mynstrel's glee;
Bid him sit at the lower end of the board
When he is amongst his meaný;
His back to the door his face to the wall,
That comers and goers shall not him see:
Bid him lodge in no common hall,
But keep him unknowne right secretly.
Commend me to my brother Sir William so dear,
In the Holt Castle there dwelleth hee;
Since the last time that we together were
In the Forest of Delameere, both fair and free,
And seven harts upon one hearde
Were brought to the back sett to him and me;

But a forester came to me with a whoore bearde
And said, Good Sir, a while rest ye,
I have found you a hart in Darnall Park,
Such a one I never saw with my eye.
I did him crave, he said I shoud him have;
He was brought to the broad heath truely;
At him I let my gray-hound then slipp
And followed after while I might dree.
He left me lyeing in an ould moss pitt;
A loud laughter then laughed hee;
He said, Rise up and draw out your cousin;
The deer is dead, come you and see.
Bid him come as a marchant of Carnarvon,
Or else of Bew-morris whether it be;
And in his company seven Welsh men,
And come to London and speak to me;
I have a great mind to speak with him,
I think it long since I him see.
Commend me to Sir John Savage that Knight,
Lady, he is my sister's sone,
Since upon a friday at night
Before my bed side he kneeled downe;
He desired me, as I was uncle dear
Many a time full tenderly,
That I would lowly King Richard require
If I might get him any fee.
I came before my Soveraigne Lord,
And kneeled down upon my knee,

So soon to me he did accord,
I thanked him full courteously.
A gatt him an hundred pounds in Kent
To him and his heirs perpetually,
Alsoe a manor of a Duchy rent,
Two hundred pounds he may spend thereby,
And high Sheriff of Worcestershire,
And alsoe the park of Tewksbury,
He hath it all at his desire,
Therewith dayley he may make merry.
Bid him come as a merchant man
Of West Chester that fair city,
And seven Yeomen to wait him on,
Bid him come to London and speak with me.
Commend me to good Gilbert Talbott,
A gentle esquire forsooth is he;
Once on a Fryday, full well I woot,
King Richard called him traitour high:
But Gilbert to his fawchon prest,
A bold esquire forsooth is he;
Their durst no sarjant him arreast,
He is called so perlous of his body.
In the Tower street I meet him then
Going to Westminster to take sanctuarie;
I light beside my horse I was upon,
The purse from my belt I gave him truely;
I bad him ride downe into the North West,
Perchance a knight in England I might him see:

Wherefore pray him at my request
To come to London to speak with me.
Then said the royall Lord so just,
Now you have written, and sealed have I,
There is no messenger that we may trust
To bring these writeings into the West Countrey,
Because our matter it is so high,
Least any man wou'd us descry.
Humphrey Brereton, then said Bessye,
Hath been true to my father & me:
He shall take the writeings in hand
And bring them into the West Countrey,
I trust him best of all this land
On this message to go for me.
Go to thy bed, father, and sleep full soon,
And I shall wake for you and me,
By to morrow at the riseing of the sune
Humphrey Brereton shall be with thee.
She brings the Lord to his bed so trimly dight,
All that night where he shoud lye;
And Bessy waked all that night
There came no sleep within her eye:
In the morning when the day can spring,
Up riseth young Bessye
And maketh hast in her dressing;
To Humphrey Brereton gone is she:
But when she came to Humphrey's bower bright,
With a small voice called she.

Humphrey answered that Lady bright,
Saith, Who calleth on me so early?
I am King Edwards daughter right,
The Countesse clear, young Bessy,
In all hast with mean and might
Thou must come speak with the Earle of Darby.
Humphrey cast upon him a gowne,
And a pair of slippers upon his feet;
Forth of his chamber then they are gone,
And went with that Lady fair and sweet.
She brought him to the bedd side,
Whereas the Earle was laid to sleep;
When the Earle Humphrey saw at that tide,
I know thou can'st secrett councell keep,
Said, my love, my trust, my life, my land,
All this Humphrey doth lye in thee;
Therefore that thou may'st understand,
In secrett wise I will tell thee,
Thou may'st make, thou may'st marr all,
Thou may undo both Bessy and me.
Take these six letters in thy hand withall,
And bring them into the North Countrey;
They be written on the backside
Whither the letters brought shou'd be;
For in every countrey where thou doest ride,
I pray the take no company.
He received these letters six full right,
Into the West wind wou'd hee;

Then met him that Lady bright.
She said, Humphrey, abide and speak with me:
A poor reward I shall give thee,
It shall be but pounds three;
If I be Queen, and may live, surely
Better rewarded shall thou be.
A litle witt God hath sent me,
I pray thee take some councell of me.
When thou ridest into the West Countrey,
I pray thee take no company;
Sit not to long, nor drink the wine,
Least in heart thou be too merry;
Such words thou may'st cast out that time,
To morrow forthought that it may be.
Humphrey at Bessye received these nobles nine,
With a bowle of wine, she cou'd him away.
He took his leave of this Lady shene,
Straight to the Holt Castle he took the way:
When Sir William Stanley did him see there,
He said to himselfe, Benedicite,
Humphrey Brereton, what makes thou here,
That here dost ride so hastily?
How fareth that Lord, my brother dear,
That lately was made the Earle of Darby?
Is my brother dead, so life and deare,
Or with King Richard what councell is he?
If he be suspected of crime or faulte
And taken into the Tower so high,

London gates shall tremble and quake,
But my brother borrowed shall be.
Tell me, Humphry, without letting,
Why hither thou ridest so hastily?
Break that letter, said Humphrey to him,
Behold, Sir, then, and you may see.
When Sir William Stanley looked the letter upon,
He stood full still in a study then,
Answer to Humphrey he wou'd give none;
But still he gawres upon a staves end.
He pulled the letter in peices three,
Into the water he coud it fling:
Have here, Humphry, said the knight so free,
I will thee give an hundred shilling,
Thou shalt not tarry here this tide,
Straight to Latham wind must he.
Alas, said Humphrey, I may not ride,
My horse is tired, as you may see;
Since I came from London city,
Neither night nor day, I tell you plain,
There came no sleep within my eye:
On my buisness I thought certaine.
Lay thee down, Humphrey, he said, and sleep,
I will give space of hours three;
A fresh horse I thee bee hyte
Shall bring thee through the West Countrey.
Humphry slept not hours two,
But on his journey well thought hee;

A fresh horse was brought him tooe,
To bring him through the West Countrey.
Then Humphrey Brereton with mickle might
Hard at Lathum knocketh hee.
Who is it, said the porter, this time of the night
That so hastily calleth on mee?
The porter then in that state,
That time of the night riseth hee,
And forthwith opned me the gate,
And received both my horse and me.
Then said Humphrey Brereton, Truely
With the Lord Strange speak woud I faine,
From his father the Earle of Darby.
Then was I welcome that time certaine.
A torch burned that same tide,
And other lights that he might see,
And brought him to the bedd side,
Where as the Lord Strange lee.
The Lord mused in that tide,
Said, Humphrey Brereton, what mak'st thou here?
How fareth my father, that noble Lord
In all England that hath no peer?
Humphrey took him a letter in hand,
And said, Behold, my Lord, and you may see.
When the Lord Strange looked the letter upon,
The tears triekled downe from his eye.
He said, We must come under a cloud,
We must never trusted bee;

We may sigh and make great moane,
This world is not as it will bee.
Have here, Humphrey, pounds three;
Better rewarded may thou bee:
Commend me to my father dear,
His daily blessing he wou'd give me.
He said alsoe in that tyde,
Tell him also thus from me;
If I be able to go or ride,
This appointment keep will I.
When Humphrey received the gold, I say,
Straight to Manchester rideth hee:
The sun was light up of the day,
He was aware of the Warden and Edward Stanley;
The one brother said to the other,
As they together their mattins did say;
Behold, he said, my owne dear brother,
Yonder comes Humphrey Brereton, it is no nay,
My father's servant at command,
Some hasting tydeings bringeth hee.
He took them either a letter in hand,
And bad them behold, read and see:
They turn'd their backs shortly tho',
And read those letters readily.
Up they leap, and laughed tóe,
And also they made game and glee:
Fair fare our father, that noble Lord,
To stirr and rise now beginneth hee:

Buckinghams blood shall be wroken,
That was beheaded in Salsbury:
Fare fall that Countesse the King's daughter,
That fair Lady, young Bessye;
We trust in Jesus in time hereafter
To bring thy love over the sea.
Have here, Humphrey, of either of us shillings ten,
Better rewarded may thou bee.
He took the gold of the two gentlemen,
To Sir John Savage then rideth hee:
He took him then a letter in hand,
And bad him behold, read and see.
When Sir John Savage looked the letter upon,
All blackned the knights blee.
Womans wisdom is wonderous to hear, loe,
My uncle is turned by young Bessye:
Whether it turn to waile or woe,
At my uncles bidding will I bee.
To Sheffield Castle at that same tide,
In all the hast that might bee,
Humphrey took his horse and forth could ride,
To Gilbert Talbott fair and free.
He took him a letter in his hand;
Behold, said Humphry, read and see.
When he the letter looked upon,
A loud laughter laughed hee;
Fare fall that Lord in his renowne there,
To stirr and rise beginneth hee:

Fair fall Bessye, that Countesse clear,
That such councell cou'd give truely.
Commend me to my nephew nigh of blood,
The young Earle of Shrewsbury,
Bid him neither dread for death nor good;
In the Tower of London if he bee,
I shall make London gates to tremble and quake,
But my nephew borrowed shall bee.
Commend me to the Countesse, that fair make,
King Edwards daughter, young Bessy;
Tell her, I trust in Jesu, that hath no pear,
To bring her love over the sea.
Commend me to that Lord, to me so dear,
That lately was made the Earle of Darby;
And every hair of my head
For a man counted might be,
With that Lord without any dread
With him will I live and dye.
Have here, Humphrey, pounds three,
Better rewarded may thou bee:
Look to London gates thou ride quickly,
In all the hast that may bee.
Commend me to that Countesse, young Bessy,
She was King Edward daughter dear,
Such a one she is, I say truely
In all this land she hath no peer.
He took his leave at that time,
Strait to London rideth he,

In all the hast that he could wind,
His journey greatly he did apply.
But when he came to London, as I weene,
It was but a litle before the evening,
There was he warr walking in a garden,
Both the Earle and Richard the King.
When the Earle did Humphrey see
When he came before the King,
He gave him a privy twink then with his eye,
That downe falls Humphrey on his knees kneeling:
Welcome, Humphrey, said the Lord,
I have missed thee weeks three.
I have been in the West, my Lord,
There born and bred was I,
For to sport and play me certaine
Among my friends far and nigh.
Tell me, Humphrey, said the Earle then,
How fareth all that same countrey?
Of all the countreys I dare well say
They be the flower of chivalry;
For they will bycker with their bow'es,
They will fight and never fly:
Tell me, Humphrey, I thee pray,
How fareth King Richard his commenty?
When King Richard heard him say so,
In his hart he was merry;
He with his cap that was so dear
He thanked that Lord most courteously,

And said, Father Stanley, thou art to me near,
You are the cheif of our poor commenty,
Half England shall be thine,
It shall be equall between thee and me,
I am thine and thou art mine,
So two fellow's will we bee.
I swear by Mary, that mild maiden,
I know no more such under the skye;
When I am King and wear the crown, then
I will be cheif of the poor commenty:
Task nor mize I will make none
In no countrey farr nor nigh;
If their goods I shou'd take and pluck them downe,
For me they wou'd fight full faintly:
There is no riches to me so rich
As is the love of our poor commenty.
When they had ended all their speeches,
They take their leave full heartiley.
And to his bower King Richard is gone,
The Earle and Humphrey Brereton
To Bessy's bower anon were gone.
When Bessy Humphrey did see anon,
She took him in her arms and kissed him times three.
Welcome, she said, Humphrey Brereton,
How hast thou spedd in the West Countrey?
I pray thee tell me quickly and anon.
Into a parlour they went from thence,
There were no more but he and shee;

Humphrey, said Bessy, tell me er'e we go hence
Some tideings out of the West Countrey;
If I shall send for yonder prince,
To come over the sea for the love of me,
And if King Richard shou'd him convince,
Alas, it were great ruthe to see,
Or murthered among the Standleys blood to be,
In deed that were great pitty;
That sight on that prince I wou'd not see
For all the gold in Christantie.
Tell me, Humphrey, I thee pray,
How thou hast spedd in the West Countrey?
What answer of them thou had now say,
And what reward they gave to thee.
By the third day of May it shall beseen
In London all that they will bee;
Thou shalt in England be a Queen,
Or else doubtless that they will dye.
Thus they proceed forth the winter then,
Their councell they kept close all three;
The Earle he wrought by prophecy certaine
In London he wou'd not abide or be;
But in the subburbs without the city
And ould inn chosen hath hee:
A drew an eagle foot on the door truely,
That the Western men might know where he did lye.
Humphrey stood on a high tower then,
He looked into the West Countrey;

Sir William Stanley and seven in green,
He was ware of the eagle drawne,
He drew himselfe so wonderous nigh,
And bad his men go into the towne,
And drink the wine and make merry.
Into the same inne he went full prest,
Whereas the Earle his brother lay.
Humphrey full soon into the West
Looks over a long lee;
He was aware of the Lord Strange and seven in green
Come rideing into the city.
When he was aware of the eagle drawn,
He grew himselfe so wonderously nigh,
He bad his men go into the towne certain,
And drink the wine and make merry.
And he himselfe drew then
Where as his father in the inne lay.
Humphrey looked into the West, I say,
Sixteen in green then did he see;
He was aware of the Warden and Edward Standley
Come rideing both in one company.
When they were aware of the eagle drawne,
The gentlemen they drew it nee;
And bad their men go into the towne,
And drink the wine and make merry:
And did go themselves into the same inn full prest,
Where the Earle their father lay.
Yet Humphrey beholdeth into the West,

And looketh towards the North Countrey;
He was aware of Sir John Savage and Sir Gilbert Talbot
Came rideing both in one company.
When they were aware of the eagle drawne,
Themselves grew it full nigh,
And bad their men go into the towne,
To drink the wine and make merry.
They did go themselves into the same inn
Where as the Earle and Bessy lye.
When all the Lords together were,
Amongst them all Bessye was full buissy.
With goodly words Bessy then said there,
Fair Lords, what will you do for me?
Will you relieve yonder prince,
That is exiled beyond the sea?
I wou'd not have King Richard him to convince
For all the gold in Christentye.
The Earle of Darby came forth then,
These words he said to young Bessye:
Ten thousand pounds will I send,
Bessy, for the love of thee,
And twenty thousand eagles' feet,
The Queen of England for to make thee.
Then Bessy most lowly the Earle did greet,
And thankt his honor most heartiley.
Sir William Stanley came forth then,
These words he said to fair Bessy:
Remember, Bessy, another time

Who doth the most, Bessy, for thee:
Ten thousand coats that shall be red certaine,
In an hours warning ready shall bee;
In England thou shalt be our Queen,
Or doubtlesse I will dye.

Sir John Savage came forth then,
These words he said to young Bessye:
A thousand marks for thy sake certaine
Will I send thy love beyond the sea.

Sir Gilbert Talbott came forth then,
These were the words he said to Bessye:
Ten thousand marks for thy sake certaine
I will send to beyond the sea.

The Lord Strange came forth then,
These were the words he said to Bessy:
A litle money and few men
Will bring thy love over the sea;
Let us keep our gold at home, said he,
For to wage our company;
For if we shou'd send it over the sea,
We shou'd but put our gold in jeopardie.

Edward Stanley came forth then,
These were the words he said to Bessye:
Remember, Bessye, another time
Who that now doth the best for thee;
For there is no power that I have,
Nor no gold for to give thee;
I will be under my father's banner, if God me save,

There either to live or dye.
Bessye came forth before the Lords all,
And downe she falleth upon her knee;
Nineteen thousand pound of gold I shall
Send my love behind the sea,
A love letter, and a gold ring,
From my heart root rite will I.
Who shall be the messenger the same to bring,
Both the gold and the writeing, over the sea?
Humphry Brereton, said Bessy,
I know him trusty and true certaine;
Therefore the writeing and the gold truely
By him shall be carried to litle Brittaine.
Alas, said Humphry, I dare not take in hand
To carry the gold over the sea,
These galley shipps they be so strange,
They will me nigh so wonderously;
They will me robb, they will me drowne,
They will take the gold from me,
Hold thy peace, Humphry, said Bessye then,
Thou shalt it carry without jeopardye;
Thou shalt have no caskett nor any male,
Nor budgett nor cloak sack shall go with thee;
Three mules that be stiff and strong withall,
Sore loaded with gold shall they bee,
With saddles-side skirted I do tell thee,
Wherein the gold sowe will I.
If any man faine whose is the shipp truely

That saileth forth upon the sea,
Say it is the Lord Lislay,
In England and France well beloved is he.
Then came forth the Earle of Darby,
These words he said to young Bessy:
He said, Bessye, thou art to blame
To appoint any shipp upon the sea;
I have a good shipp of my owne
Shall carry Humphrey with the mules three;
An eagle shall be drawne upon the mast top,
That the Italians may it see;
There is no freak in all France
The eagle that dare come nee:
If any one ask whose shipp it is, then
Say it is the Earles of Darby.
Humphrey took the three mules then,
Into the West wind wou'd hee,
Without all doubt at Liverpoole
He took shipping upon the sea.
With a swift wind and a liart
He so saild upon the sea,
To Beggrames Abbey in litle Brittain,
Where as the English prince lie.
The porter was a Cheshire man,
Well he knew Humphrey when he him see.
Humphrey knockt at the gate truely,
Where as the porter stood it by
And welcomed me full heartily,

And received then my mules three:
I shall thee give in this breed
To thy reward pounds three.
I will none of thy gold, the porter said,
Nor, Humphrey, none of the fee;
I will open thee the gates certaine,
To receive thee and the mules three;
For a Cheshire man born am I certain,
From the Malpas but miles three.
The porter opned up the gates that time,
And received him and the mules three;
The wine that was in the hall that time
He gave to Humphrey Brereton truely.
Alas, said Humphrey, how shou'd I doe,
I am strayed in a strange countrey,
The Prince of England I do not know,
Before I did him never see.
I shall thee tell, said the porter then;
The Prince of England know shall ye,
Low where he siteth at the butts certaine,
With other Lords two or three:
He weareth a gown of velvet black,
And it is cutted above the knee,
With a long visage and pale and black,—
There-by the Prince know may ye.
A wart he hath, the porter said,
A litle alsoe above the chinn,
His face is white, his wart is redd,

No more than the head of a small pinn:
You may know the Prince certaine,
As soon as you look upon him truely.—
He received the wine of the porter; then
With him he took the mules three.

When Humphrey came before the Prince,
He falleth downe upon his knee;
He delivereth the letters which Bessye sent,
And so did he the mules three,
A rich ring with a stone,
Thereof the Prince glad was hee;
He took the ring of Humphrey then,
And kissed the ring times three.
Humphrey kneeled still as any stone,
As sure as I do tell to thee;
Humphrey of the Prince answer gott none,
Therefore in heart was he heavy;
Humphrey stood up then full of skill,
And then to the Prince said he:
Why standest thou so still at thy will,
And no answer dost give to me?
I am come from the Standleys blood so dear,
King of England for to make thee;
A fairer Lady then thou shalt have to thy fair
There is not one in all Christantye;
She is a Countesse, a King's daughter, Humphrey said,
The name of her it is Bessye,
She can write, and she can read,

Well can she work by prophecy;
I may be called a lewd messenger,
For answer of thee I can gett none;
I may sail home with heavy cheare,
What shall I say when I come home?
The Prince he took the Lord Lee,
And the Earle of Oxford was him nee,
The Lord Ferris wou'd not him beguile truely,
To councell they are gone all three.
When they had their councell taken,
To Humphrey then turned he:
Answer, Humphrey, I can give none truely
Within the space of weeks three.
The mules into a stable were taken anon,
The saddle skirts unopened were,
Therein he found gold great plenty
For to wage a company.
He caused the Abbott to make him chear:
In my stead now let him be,
If I be King, and wear the crowne,
Well accquitted Abbott shalt thou be.
Early in the morning they made them knowne,
As soon as the light they cou'd see;
With him he taketh his lords three,
And straight to Paris he took his way.
An herriott of arms they made ready,
Of men and money they cou'd him pray,
And shipps to bring him over the sea.

The Stanleys blood for me hath sent,
The King of England for to make me,
And I thank them for their intent;
For if ever in England I wear the crowne,
Well accquitted the King of France shall be.
Then answered the King of France anon,
Men nor money he getteth none of me,
Nor no shipps to bring him over the sea;
In England if he wear the crowne,
Then will he claim them for his own truely.
With this answer departed the Prince anon,
And so departed the same tide,
And the English Lords three.
To Beggrames Abbey soon cou'd the ride,
There as Humphrey Brereton then lee.
Have, Humphrey, a thousand mark here,
Better rewarded may thou be;
Commend me to Bessy, that Countesse clear,
Before her never did I see.
I trust in God she shall be my feer,
For her I will travell over the sea.
Commend me to my father Stanley, to me so dear,
My owne mother married hath he;
Bring him here a love letter full right,
And another to young Bessye,
Tell her, I trust in Jesus full of might
That my Queen that she shall be.
Commend me to Sir William Stanley,

That noble knight in the West Countrey,
Tell him that about Michaelmas certaine
In England I do hope to be:
Att Millford haven I will come inn,
With all the power that make may I,
The first towne I will come inn
Shall be the towne of Shrewsbury:
Pray Sir William Stanley, that noble knight,
That night that he will look on me.
Commend me to Sir Gilbert Tallbott, that royall knight,
He much in the North Countrey;
And Sir John Savage, that man of might,—
Pray them all to look on me:
For I trust in Jesus Christ so full of might
In England for to abide and bee.

I will none of thy gold, Sir Prince, said Humphrey then,
Nor none sure will I have of thy fee;
Therefore keep thy gold thee within,
For to wage thy company:
If every hair were a man,
With thee, Sir Prince, will I be.

Thus Humphrey Brereton his leave hath tâne,
And saileth forth upon the sea;
Straight to London rideth he then,
There as the Earle and Bessy lay;
He took them either a letter in hand,
And bad them behold, read and see.
The Earle took leave of Richard the King,

And into the West wind woud he.
He left Bessye in Leicester then,
And bad her lye in privitye;
For if King Richard knew thee here, anon
In a fire burned must thou be.
Straight to Latham the Earle is gone,
There as the Lord Strange then lee,
He sent the Lord Strange to London
To keep King Richards company.
Sir William Stanley made anone
Ten thousand coats readily,
Which were as redd as any blood,
There on the harts head was set full high,
Which after were tryed both trusty and good
As any coud be in Christantye.
Sir Gilbert Talbot ten thousand doggs
In one hours warning for to be,
And Sir John Savage fifteen white hoods,
Which wou'd fight and never flee,
Edward Stanley had three hundred men,
There were no better in Christentye,
Sir Rees ap Thomas, a knight of Wales certain,
Eight thousand spears brought he.
Sir William Stanley sat in the Holt Castle,
And looked over his head so high;
Which way standeth the wind, can any tell?
I pray you, my men, look and see.
The wind it standeth south-east,

So said a knight that stood him by.
This night yonder Prince truely
Into England entereth hee;
He called a gentleman that stood him nigh,
His name was Rowland of Warburton,
He bad him go to Shrewsbury that night,
And bid yonder Prince come inn;
But when Rowland came to Shrewsbury,
The port culles it was let downe;
They called him Henry Tydder in scorn truely,
And said in England he shou'd wear no crowne.
Rowland bethought him of a wyle then,
And tied a writeing to a stone,
And threw the writeing over the wall certain,
And bad the baliffs to look it upon.
They opned the gates on every side,
And met the Prince with procession;
And wou'd not in Shrewsbury there abide,
But straight he drest him to Stafford towne.
King Richard heard then of his comeing,
He called his Lords of great renowne;
The Lord Pearcy he came to the King,
And upon his knees he falleth downe:
I have thirty thousand fighting men
For to keep the crown with thee.
The Duke of Northfolk came to the King anone,
And downe he falleth upon his knee;
The Earle of Surrey, that was his heir,

Were both in one company:
We have either twenty thousand men here
For to keep the crown with thee.
The Lord Latimer, and the Lord Lovell,
And the Earle of Kent he stood him by;
The Lord Ross, and the Lord Scrope, I you tell
They wer' all in one company;
The Bishopp of Durham he was not away;
Sir William Bonner he stood him by:
The good Sir William of Harrington, as I say,
Said he wou'd fight and never fly.

King Richard made a messenger,
And sent him into the West Countrey;
And bid the Earle of Darby make him bowne,
And bring twenty thousand men unto me,
Or else the Lord Strange his head I will him send,
And doubtless his son shall dye;
For hitherto his father I took for my friend,
And now he hath deceived me.

Another herald appeared then:—
To Sir William Stanley, that doughty knight;
Bid him bring to me ten thousand men,
Or else to death he shall be dight.

Then answered that doughty knight,
And spake to the herald without letting;
Say, upon Bosseworth field I mind to fight,
Uppon Monday early in the morning;
Such a breakfast I him behight,

As never did knight to any King.
The messenger home can him gett,
To tell King Richard this tydeing.
Fast together his hands then cou'd he ding,
And said the Lord Strange shou'd surely dye;
And putt him into the Tower of London,
For at liberty he shou'd not bee.
Lett us leave Richard and his Lords full of pride,
And talk we more of the Stanley's blood,
That brought Richmond over the sea with wind and tyde,
From litle Brittain into England over the flood.
Now is Earle Richmond into Stafford come,
And Sir William Stanley to litle Stoone:
The Prince had rather then all the gold in Christentye
To have Sir William Stanley to look upon.
A messenger was made ready anone,
That night to go to litle Stoon:
Sir William Stanley he rideth to Stafford towne,
With a solemn company ready bowne;
When the knight to Stafford was comin,
That Earle Richmond might him see,
He took him in his arms then,
And there he kissed him times three:
The welfare of thy body doth comfort me more
Then all the gold in Christantye.
Then answered that royall knight there,
And to the Prince these words spake he;
Remember man, both night and day,

Who doth now the most for thee;
In England thou shalt wear a crown, I say,
Or else doubtless I will dye:
A fairer lady then thou shalt have for thy feer,
Was there never in Christanty;
She is a Countesse, a King's daughter,
And there to both wise and witty.
I must this night to Stone, my soveraigne,
For to comfort my company.
The Prince he took him by the hand,
And said, Farewell, Sir William, fair and free.

Now is word come to Sir William Stanley there,
Earley in the Monday in the morning,
That the Earle of Darby, his brother dear,
Had given battle to Richard the King.
That wou'd I not, said Sir William anone,
For all the gold in Christantye,
That the battle shou'd be done,
Unless that he at the battle shou'd be done;
Straight to Lichfield cou'd he ride,
In all the hast that might bee;
And when he came to Lichfield that tyde,
All they, cryed King Henry,
Straight to Bolesworth can they go
In all the hast that might be.
But when he came Bolesworth field unto,
There met a royall company;
The Earle of Darby thither was come,

And twenty thousand stood him by;—
Sir John Savage, his sisters son,
He was his nephew of his blood so nigh,
He had fifteen hundred fighting men,
That wou'd fight and never flye;—
Sir William Stanley, that royall knight, then
Ten thousand red-coats had he,
They wou'd bicker with their bows there,
They wou'd fight and never flye;
The Red Ross, and the Blew Boar,
They were both a solemn company.
Sir Rees ap Thomas he was thereby,
With ten thousand spears of mighty tree.
The Earle of Richmond went to the Earle of Darby,
And downe he falleth upon his knee;
Said, Father Stanley, full of might,
The vaward I pray you give to me,
For I am come to claime my right,
And faine revenged wou'd I bee.
Stand up, he said, my son quickly,
Thou has thy mothers blessing truely,
The vaward, son, I will give to thee,
So that thou wilt be ordered by me:
Sir William Stanley, my brother dear,
In the battle he shall bee;
Sir John Savage, he hath no peer,
He shall be a wing then to thee;
Sir Rees ap Thomas shall break the array,

For he will fight and never flee;
I my selfe will hove on the hill, I say,
The fair battle I will see.

King Richard he hoveth upon the mountaine;
He was aware of the banner of the bould Stanley,
And said, Fetch hither the Lord Strange certain,
For he shall dye this same day:
To the death, Lord, thee ready make,
For I tell thee certainly
That thou shalt dye for thy uncles sake,
Wild William of Standley.

If I shall dye, said the Lord Strange, then,
As God forbid it shou'd so bee,
Alas, for my Lady that is at home,
It shou'd be long or she see me;
But we shall meet at dooms day,
When the great doom shall be.
He called for a Gent. in good say
Of Lancashire, both fair and free,
The name of him it was Lathum:
A ring of gould he took from his finger,
And threw it to the Gent. then,
And bad him bring it to Lancashire,
To his Lady that was at home;
At her table she may sit right,
Or she see her Lord it may be long,
I have no foot to fligh nor fight,
I must be murdered with the King.

If fortune my uncle Sir William Stanley loose the field,
As God forbid it shou'd so bee,
Pray her to take my eldest son and child,
And exile him over behind the sea;
He may come in another time,
By feild or fleet, by tower or towne,
Wreak so he may his fathers death in fyne,
Upon Richard of England that weareth the crown.
A knight to King Richard then did appeare,
The good Sir William of Harrington:—
Let that Lord have his life, my dear
Sir King, I pray you grant me this boone,
We shall have upon this field anon,
The father, the son, and the uncle all three;
Then shall you deem, Lord, with your own mouth then,
What shall be the death of them all three.
Then a block was cast upon the ground,
Thereon the Lords head was laid;
A slave over his head can stand,
And thus that time to him thus said:
In faith there is no other booty tho'
But need that thou must be dead.
Harrington in hart was full woe,
When he saw the Lord must needs be dead:
He said, Our ray breaketh on ev'ry side,
We put our feyld in jeopardie.
He took up the Lord that tyde,
King Richard after did him never see:

Then they blew up the bewgles of brass,
That made many a wife to cry, alas!
And many a wives child father lesse;
They shott of guns then very fast,
Over their heads they cou'd them throw;
Arrow's flew them between,
As thick as any hayle or snowe,
As then that time might plaine be seene.
Then Rees ap Thomas with the black raven
Shortly he brake their array;
Then with thirty thousand fighting men
The Lord Pearcy went his way;
The Duke of Northfolke wou'd have fledd with a good will
With twentye thousand of his company,
They went up to a wind millne upon a hill
That stood soe fayre and wonderousse hye,
There he met Sir John Savage, a royall knight,
And with him a worthy company.
To the death was he then dight,
And his son prisoner taken was he;
Then the Lord Alroes began for to flee,
And so did many other moe.
When King Richard that sight did see,
In his heart he was never soe woe;—
I pray you, my merry men, be not away,
For upon this field will I like a man dye,
For I had rather dye this day,
Then with the Standley prisoner for to be.

A knight to King Richard can say there,
Good Sir William of Harrington,
He said, Sir King, it hath no peere
Upon this feild to death to be done,
For there may no man these dints abide;
Low, your horse is ready at your hand;
Sett the crown upon my head that tyde,
Give me my battle ax in my hand;
I make a vow to mild Mary that is so bright,
I will dye the King of merry England.
Besides his head they hewed the crown down right,
That after he was not able to stand;
They dunge him downe as they were woode,
The beat his bassnet to his head,
Untill the braine came out with bloode;
They never left him till he was dead.
Then carryed they him to Leicester,
And pulled his head under his feet.

Bessye mett him with a merry cheere,
And with these words she did him greete:
How like you the killing of my brethren dear?
Welcome, gentle uncle, home!
Great solace it was to see and hear,
When the battle it was all done.
I tell you masters without lett,
When the Red Ross so fair of hew
And young Bessy together mett,
It was great joy I say to you.

A bishopp them married with a ringe
The two bloods of great renowne.
Bessy said, Now may we singe,
Wee two bloods are made all one.
The Earle of Darby he was there;
And Sir William Stanley, that noble Knight,
Upon their heads he set the crown so fair,
That was made of gold so bright.
And there he came under a cloud,
That some time in England looked full high;
But then the hart he lost his head,
That after no man cou'd him see.
But Jesus, that is both bright and shine,
And born was of mild Mary,
Save and keep our noble King,
And alsoe the poor commentie.

AMEN.

NOTES.

Page 1. "*Before the Earle of Darby her self alone.*"

THIS ballad is not the only place where the title of Derby is assigned to Thomas second Lord Stanley, before the date of its having been actually conferred. Bishop Stanley falls into a similar mistake; and after describing the means used to obtain the hand of the Countess of Richmond, that zealous patroness of religious and learned institutions,—which, inasmuch as they consist in her suitor's prowess at tournaments, are somewhat anomalous,—he proceeds,

"And soone after espowsed they were indeede,
And forward in honour they did well proceede.
Then after was he created incontinent,
Earl of Derbie in the next parliament."

But the history of the second Lord Stanley has been a source of confusion to more exact chroniclers than either Bishop Stanley or Humphry Brereton. Dugdale confounds this Lord with his father; and Lodge in the "Illustrious Portraits" marries him to the wife of his grandson, and proceeds to make his great-grandchildren the baron's immediate offspring.

Sir John Stanley, the father of Thomas Lord Stanley, died 37 Henry VI. The first mention of the Barony of Stanley is in

the List of Lords who assisted in the treaty with the Scots at Coventry, 11th June 1457; and therefore the date assigned by Collins to this title, 34 Henry VI. 1456, is probably correct. The parliament of July 9, 1455, left the names of the Peers summoned unrecorded; and the next parliament, which met at Coventry 20th November 1460, passed a bill of attainder against the son of Lord Stanley, which sufficiently disproves Dugdale's conjecture, that the barony was granted 24th May, 1461.

The title of Derby was probably selected from the honours of the royal House of Lancaster, to reward the father-in-law of the king and his relation in no very remote degree of consanguinity. The mother of Lord Stanley was the great-grand-daughter of Henry Plantagenet Earl of Lancaster and Derby, the daughter and eventually co-heir of Sir Robert Goushill, by a marriage with the eldest daughter and co-heir of Richard Fitzalan sixth Earl of Arundel, who was attainted and executed for treason, 1397. Sir Robert Goushill was the fourth husband of this lady; and it is doubtful whether some of the ancient baronies of the Fitzalans are not in abeyance amongst her descendants, and as much the property of the Stanleys as of the Howards. The first wife of Lord Stanley, the Lady Eleanor Neville, was the great-grand-daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster and Earl of Derby. Sir William Stanley is said to have sought the earldom of Chester, another of the royal honours, to which, in numbering themselves amongst the heirs of the Fitzalans, the Stanleys claimed to have been borne by their ancestors. "Itaque ambitio ejus in tantum exorbitavit, et modum omnem excessit, ut a Rege se Comitem Cestriæ creari peteret. Qui honor cum semper ut appenagium Principatûs Walliæ reputaretur, et Filio Regis Primogenito ex more cedere soleret. Petitio illa, non solum a Rege repulsam tulit, sed etiam animum ejus secreto offendit." (Bacon.)

The same Sir William Stanley is made by Ford, in the tragedy of "Perkin Warbeck," in going to the scaffold thus to mention his brother:—

"My next suit is, my Lords,
To be remembered to my noble brother
Derby; my much griev'd brother. Oh persuade him
That I shall stand no blemish to his house
In chronicles writ in another age.
* * * * *
Tell him, he must not think *the style of Derby*,
Nor being husband of King Henry's mother,
The league with Peers, the smiles of fortune,—can
Secure his peace above the state of man."

A question has been raised as to the precise place intended to be designated by the title of Derby, whether it be the hundred in Lancashire now known by the name of West Derby, and which in Domeboc is called Derbieshire, or the county; and, as though to render the solution more difficult, the Ferrars and the Plantagenets were possessed of estates in both places. It is expressly stated that the honour of Derby, which, upon the forfeiture of Robert de Ferrars the third earl of that house, was in the grant, from which the following is extracted, conveyed by Henry the Third, A.D. 1266, to his second son Edmond Crouchback, did not thereby change the place of its derivation. "Sciatis nos dedisse, concessisse, et hâc cartâ nostrâ confirmasse, Edmundo filio nostro carissimo, honorem Derebeie, castra, maneria, et omnes terras et tenementa quæ fuerunt Roberti de Ferrariis." Some heralds have, however, doubted whether this document conveyed more than the estates; but the connection between the county and the title, whilst the latter was in the hands of the

Plantagenets, is satisfactorily shown in the King's writ to the sheriff of the county of Derby on the advancement of Henry of Lancaster to the earldom of Derby, dated 15th April, 19 Edward III. (See Rolls of Parl. II. 452.) The terms in which John, A.D. 1199, bestowed upon William sixth Earl Ferrars the title of Derby, is decisive as to the source of the honour. "Johannes Dei gratiâ, &c. &c. Sciatis Nos reddidisse et concessisse et presenti cartâ confirmâsse dilecto nostro Willielmo de Ferrariis Comiti de Dareby, tertium denarium de omnibus placitis placitatis per vice comitem in toto comitatu de Dereby tam in Dereby quam extra, unde ipse Comes est, sicut unquam aliquis antecessorum suorum illum melius habuit, tenendum sibi et hæredibus suis de nobis, et hæredibus nostris imperpetuum, et ipsum tanquam Comitem propriâ manu gladio cinximus." The circumstance of this William having been the first of his family who held lands in West Derby, probably gave rise to the conjectured alliance between the title and the hundred; but a slight attention to dates will show that the earldom, which in the time of John must unquestionably have had a territorial character, could not be thence derived. Randle Blundeville sixth Earl of Chester purchased, says Leycester, (p. 142) "all the lands of Roger de Meresey which he had between the rivers Ribble and Mersey in Lancashire, about the 15th year of Henry the Third, 1230, as appears by the deeds following," &c. Now Randle died 1232, and his lands were divided amongst his four sisters, one of whom had married William de Ferrars, who was created Earl of Derby 1199, thirty-three years before he thus became possessed of estates in West Derby.

Thomas Lord Stanley was created Earl of Derby 27th October 1485, three days before the coronation of Henry the Seventh. The life of this nobleman may be found in the Peerages, in Hard-

ing's "Biographical Mirror," and Lodge's "Illustrious Portraits:" the two last books contain engraved portraits of the earl. He died in October 1504.

The character of the first Earl of Derby, as transmitted to us by ballad-mongers and chroniclers, is that of a very "perfit gentil knight;" but in the lawless age in which he lived, hospitality and courage were too often combined with an overbearing and brutal carriage. Of the conduct of this Lord at Bosworth, the distance of time prevents the formation of any very accurate judgement. There is abundant evidence that he in some degree deceived Richard, and that he also entirely deluded those Lancashire gentlemen who were not enrolled in his immediate train; but the circumstance of his afterwards becoming the possessor of the forfeited estates of those who in the Palatine had opposed Henry the Seventh, whilst it accounts for the dislike in which he was held throughout the county, is not of itself sufficient to justify the charges of treachery and rapaciousness. It may readily be believed, that in order to secure the grants of land made to him, this nobleman was obliged to build castles in various parts of the county; for the gentry of Lancashire were at this period as turbulent as poverty and the unsettled state of the government could make them. John Paston, jun. writes from Holt Castle, 1st March, 1463: "The commons in Lancashire and Cheshire were up to the number of a 10,000 or more, but now they be down again; and one or two of them was headed in Chester as on Saturday last past." (Paston's Letters, vol. i. p. 289.) William Paston writes to his brother Sir John, 7th March, 1473: "Sir, my Lord hath sent unto the most part of the gentlemen of Essex to wait upon him at Chelmsford, where, as he intendeth to meet with the King, and that they be well appointed, that the Lancashire men may see that there be gentlemen of so great substance,

that they be able to buy all Lancashire. Men think that ye among you will do the same." (Paston's Letters, vol. ii. p. 163.)

The murder of Sir John Butler of Bewsey, which is said to have been instigated by Lord Stanley, is truly an indelible stain upon his character. The story was first published in the notes to a poem entitled "Bewsey," printed anonymously at Warrington 1796, and has since found its way, though without acknowledgement, into the MSS. purchased from Mr. Barrett for the Manchester Cheetham Library. In both places the Bodleian Library is referred to as containing the original account. The assassination was perpetrated at night under the auspices of "Sir Piers Leigh and Mister William Savage by the procurement of Lord Stanley." The servants were corrupted; and the widow of Sir John Butler, prevented by the influence of the murderers from obtaining justice, consoled herself with causing a tomb of alabaster to be erected in Warrington church, where her own effigy and remains repose by the side of those of her husband; and near lies the Moor who fell in endeavouring to preserve his master. The story requires confirmation, although the existence of the monument, and of a tradition almost as durable, gives it considerable probability. There are some rude verses in Bishop Stanley's chronicles relating to a feud between Richard Duke of Gloucester and Lord Stanley; and the two parties appear to have successively occupied Preston with their forces, but did not come into collision.

Page 1. "*Who married you to the Margaret Richmond?*"

The life of Margaret Countess of Richmond is too well known to require any lengthened notice. That Edward the Fourth promoted her marriage with Lord Stanley may be true; but

Brereton is mistaken in making her the mother of George Stanley. This lady had no children by her last marriage; and during the greater part of her residence with the Earl of Derby was bound by a vow of chastity, which she is said to have religiously observed.

Page 1. "*And your son the Lord George Strange.*"

George Lord Strange was the son of the Earl of Derby by his first wife, the Lady Eleanor fourth daughter of Richard Neville Earl of Salisbury, and sister to the celebrated Earl of Warwick. The connection of the Stanleys with the Nevilles accounts for the manner in which the former house espoused the York interests, attached, as it otherwise must have been, by relationship and gratitude to the Lancasterian party. The battle of Blore Heath in 1459, is the first place in which the Stanleys avowed their hostility to Henry the Sixth: the execution of the Earl of Salisbury at Pomfret in 1460, must have confirmed them in their newly adopted polities; and the marriage of George Lord Strange to Joan, sole daughter and heiress of John Lord Strange, by Jaquetta daughter of Richard Widville Earl Rivers, and sister to the Queen, attached the family to the support of Edward the Fourth. The circumstances which induced Lord Stanley in 1469 to decline joining his brother-in-law the Earl of Warwick, when Lord Oxford who was similarly situated adopted a different course, are not very satisfactorily shown; it is possible that his first lady was then no more. The marriage of George Stanley was subsequent to the death of Lord Strange, which took place 1477. Stanley was first summoned to the House of Peers in right of this barony, 1482. The life of George Lord Strange would have been little known but for the perilous situation in which he

was placed during the battle of Bosworth. This custom of keeping the eldest son "in pawne for the father," was repeated towards the Stanley family in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It appears that on the 1st of August 1485, Lord Strange assisted at a council held in the presence of Richard the Third at Nottingham Castle, (Rymer, Tom. V. p. iii. page 165.) being only twenty-one days before he was ordered for execution. This nobleman was the first cousin to "Lady Bessy," and also stood in the same degree of relationship to Queen Anne. He died in his father's lifetime; Weever states in 1487; Collins, who refers to Weever, says in 1497; and a MS. pedigree (Cotton MSS. Titus, b. 8, fo. 65.) sets it down 1501;—all agree that he was buried near his mother in St. James's, Garlick-hithe. There is a notice of the life of George Lord Strange, with an indifferent portrait, in Harding's Biographical Mirror. Bishop Stanley says that this lord was so beloved, that at his death "divers went mad," and adds that he was poisoned at "an ungodly banquet."

The history of the descent of the Barony of Strange of Knokyn, presents so many anomalies, and is so slightly noticed in the Peerages, that no apology is necessary for here endeavouring to show the precise state in which that ancient honour now exists. The account given by Dugdale, Banks, &c. of the family of Strange is very erroneous; but a pedigree, (Harl. MSS. 1997, fo. 78.) drawn up for the use, and bearing the signature, of Henry Earl of Derby, and corrected by Randle Holmes, supplies many deficiencies, although even a more detailed genealogy would be necessary to support the claims of the Stranges to all the honours thus set forth upon the tomb of the last heir male of the family. (Weever, p. 530.)

"Sub hac Tumba jacet, &c. &c. Johannes Dominus le Strange, Dominus de Knocking, Mohun, Bassett, Burnel, et Lacy, et Do-

minus de Colham una cum pictura Jaquette quondam uxoris suæ," &c. &c.

The fate of the baronies thus attached to the title of Strange is not wholly foreign to the present inquiry. In the epitaph, Joan Lady Strange describes herself as simply "Johanna Domina le Strange;" thus neglecting to assume those honours which are enumerated as belonging to her father, and which, if vested in him as heir general to the families mentioned, ought in 1509 to have become her property. At various subsequent periods these baronies were annexed to the titles of the Stanleys Earls of Derby; but no where is the addition countenanced by authority. At the funeral of Earl Edward, which was regulated with scrupulous heraldic nicety, there were banners of the arms of the various houses represented by the deceased; and the omission of Mohun, &c. is a strong presumptive proof that to these titles no good claim could be made. The same remark applies to the charges upon the household coats of the Stanleys, as they were displayed at various and remote periods. The difficulty of precisely defining the right by which George Lord Strange sat in the House of Peers, is increased by the apparent irregularity in the descent of these inferior honours. The opinion of both Dugdale and Collins seems to be, that the writ of summons directed to George Stanley was not the creation of a new title, but the sanction of the king to the assumption of a barony, which, descendable to the heirs general, had become the property of Lady Strange. This view is further confirmed by the rank assigned to the barony; and yet it is hardly to be reconciled with the disuse of the other titles, and with the decision which, during the existence of female heirs, gave the Barony of Strange to the sixth Earl of Derby. It must be borne in mind that, although baronies by tenure had been abolished in the time of Henry the

Third, yet until the middle of the seventeenth century these honours had not entirely lost their territorial character; and that the lands once constituting the barony passing with the title, the husband of the female heir, after issue born, by the courtesy of England had a right for life to the possessions of his wife; whence then the practice or custom of a summons to Parliament *jure uxoris*. (Banks' Extinct Baronage, vol. i.) Accordingly then to the principles which in those days regulated the descent of honours, principles which it is needless to remark have long, with the greatest propriety, been disused; George Lord Strange must be considered as becoming a Baron *pleno jure*, and not *gratiâ regis*.

The descent of the honour from 1482 to 1594 was through the direct male line; at this last date Earl Ferdinando died, leaving three daughters; and his brother Sir William Stanley succeeding to the title of Derby, assumed also that of Strange. In 1627 Sir James Stanley, K.B. commonly called Lord Strange, received summons to parliament, and took rank as is usual, when the king calls up the eldest son of a peer, according to the date of the honour belonging to the father, and which the son had hitherto borne by courtesy. In the Journals of the House of Peers under the date of June 7, 1628 (Sunday), is the following entry: "The Lord President declared to the House that His Majesty hath granted his writ of summons to this Parliament unto James the son and heir apparent of William, now Earl of Darby, by the name of James Strange Chevalier, and that the Heralds have ranked the said James in the place of the ancient Barons of Strange; and his Lordship showed that Anne Countess of Castlehaven, the eldest daughter and one of the coheirs of Ferdinando late Earl of Darby deceased, doth claim the name and title of the said Barony of Strange. Whereupon it is this day ordered,

the said writ of summons, and the said rank and place of the said James, shall be no way prejudicial unto the right and claim of the said Anne Countess of Castlehaven, nor unto any of the rights and claims of any of the daughters and coheirs of the said Ferdinando late Earl of Derby deceased." This *salvo jure* does not seem to have been followed by any attempts to gain the title on behalf of the co-heirs. The name of Anne Countess of Castlehaven, (or rather the same lady under the more widely known designation of Lady Audley,) was about this time connected with one of the most atrocious cases in the long history of crime, and her subsequent life was passed in complete retirement. The representatives of the younger sisters, then a very numerous body, had no reason to suppose that the king would depart, in their favour, from the custom of giving a barony in abeyance to the eldest daughter, although the power of selecting amongst the co-heirs in such a case be the king's undoubted prerogative.

Upon the death of the tenth Earl of Derby in 1735, his titles were assumed by Sir Edward Stanley of Bickerstaff as heir male deducing from George Lord Strange. On the 7th of February 1736, the Duke of Athol presented a petition to the House of Peers, stating,—

"That His Majesty King Henry the Seventh, in the first year of his reign, created Thomas Lord Stanley, Earl of Derby, to him and the heirs male of his body.

"That the said dignity came by mesne descents to Ferdinando Earl of Derby, who died seised thereof to him and the heirs male of the body of the said Thomas, leaving three daughters, Anne, Frances, and Elizabeth, and no son.

"That the said Ferdinando did not die seised of any title or dignity of a baron created by letters patent; and whatever titles

and dignities he had which were created by any writ, or writ of summons to Parliament, descended to his said three daughters in abeyance.

"That the said title and dignity of Earl of Derby came to William, brother of the said Ferdinando as heir male of the body of the said Thomas; but the said William never was seised of the title or dignity of a Baron.

"That James, your petitioner's ancestor, was summoned to parliament in the third year of King Charles the First as a Baron, the writ being directed 'Jacobo Strange Chevalier;' and being also summoned to several ensuing parliaments in the said king's reign, sat and voted by the said title of Lord Strange in the lifetime of his father, the said William Earl of Derby.

"That upon the death of the said William Earl of Derby, the said James Lord Strange succeeded to the said title and dignity of Earl of Derby, and died seised thereof to him and the heirs male of the body of the said Thomas Earl of Derby, and of the said title and dignity of Lord Strange to him and his heirs.

"That the said title and dignity of Lord Strange came by mesne descents to the late Earl of Derby, who died without issue in the month of February 1735.

"That your petitioner is cousin and next heir to the said late Earl of Derby, and great-grandson and sole heir of the said James Lord Strange, and consequently entitled to the said title and dignity of Lord Strange."

On the 9th of March 1736, the lords made their report, which does not appear in the printed Journals; and on the 14th of March the Duke took his seat in virtue of a writ directed to "James Murray of Strange, Chevalier," and the place assigned to him was that belonging to the barony created in 1627; and this is important to remark, as the editors of some of the Peer-

ages set down the date 1299, to which ancient honour the Duke of Athol has not the shadow of a title. If the barony descended to the heirs male of George Lord Strange, as the heralds in King Charles the First's time believed, and which is not otherwise without some show of probability, the present Earl of Derby is its true possessor: if on the contrary George Lord Strange enjoyed the ancient honour *pleno jure*, as one descendable to the heirs general, then it remains in abeyance amongst the representatives of the co-heirs of Earl Ferdinando. In either case the Duke of Athol, deducing from George Lord Strange, stands remote from the true heir. The title of Strange of Knokyn created in 1627, as confirmed by the House of Peers, was evidently granted in mistake. The form of the writ, and the place assigned to James Stanley, both show that the king imagined he was summoning the son for one of the father's baronies, and not thereby creating an honour with a limitation as to the descent, which in the seventeenth century had ceased to be common.

Page 2. "*And Harden Lands under your hands,*
And Moules Dale also under your fee."

Hawarden or Harden Castle, in Flintshire, "stands," says Grose, "on an eminence in the village of Hawarden, about five miles S.W. of Chester, and one mile south of the River Dee."

Hawarden was granted to Sir Thomas Stanley by the crown in 1440. In 1450 it was resumed, and given to Edward Prince of Wales: soon afterwards the feoffees of the Earl of Salisbury, to whose family it had belonged half a century before, claimed, and obtained it. In 1454 Sir Thomas Stanley, who had married the daughter of Neville Earl of Salisbury, again became its possessor. Edward the Fourth probably confirmed this last grant.

After the Earl of Derby's death, Hawarden was in the possession of Margaret of Richmond his second wife.

The manner in which this castle fell into the hands of the family of Glynne, is connected with a very disastrous and unintelligible portion of the history of the Stanleys.

Moldsdale in Flintshire was granted to the Stanleys, according to Mr. Pennant, in the time of Richard the Second; but Brereton may nevertheless be perfectly correct in causing Lady Bessy to refer to her father as bestowing it on Lord Stanley; for during the wars of York and Lancaster, the dominant party frequently returned to its followers the possessions their adversaries had confiscated.

Page 2. "*Your brother Sir William Stanley by parliament.*"

Sir William Stanley, the younger and only brother of the first Earl of Derby. His powerful connections and personal bravery insured to him that advancement which his turbulent spirit forbade him to maintain. After supporting Edward, attaching himself to Richard, going over at Bosworth to Henry, he concluded, by losing his head, A.D. 1495, in the cause of Perkin Warbeck.

Page 2. "*The Holt Castle who gave him truely?*"

"Holt Castle, Denbighshire, was situated close to the River Dee, and defended upon three sides by a moat forty or fifty yards wide cut out of the solid rock. The fortress consisted of five bastions, of which four were round, and the remaining one facing the river, square. The entrance was by a drawbridge on the west side." (Bingley.) This castle was built by John Earl Warren (Watson's Earls of Warren, vol. i. p. 267), and became succes-

sively the property of the families of Fitzalan, Beauchamp, and Neville. The precise time at which Sir William Stanley became its possessor does not appear. At the commencement of Edward's reign Holt was in other hands; but Sir William is said to have been its owner, 1 Ric. III., although Bingley, copying probably from Pennant, states that Henry the Seventh gave it to the knight. The plunder which was found at Holt after the execution of Sir W. Stanley, was not a fifth part of the value of the royal treasures seized in the same place, A.D. 1399, by Henry the Fourth.

Page 2. "*Who gave him Brome-field, that I now ment?*"

Bromefield and Yale, the lordship in Denbighshire in which Holt is situated.

Page 2. "*Who gave him Chirk-land to his fee?*"

Chirk land and its strong Castle were probably, with his other possessions in Denbighshire, conveyed to Sir William Stanley in the manner described in the ballad; upon his attainder these lands escheated to the crown.

Page 2. "*Who made him High Chamberlain of Cheshire?*"

Sir William received this appointment 1 Edward IV. and enjoyed it until his death, 10 Henry VII.

Page 2. "*And also the Forrest of Delameer.*"

4th January, 1 Edward IV. the chief rangership of the forests

of Mara and Mondrem (Delamere) was given to Thomas Lord Stanley; Sir William Stanley held this office 1 Richard III.

Page 3. "*He called to him my unckle Richard.*"

The ballad writer, as might be expected, is frequently inaccurate upon subjects, the knowledge of which he could only derive from hearsay. The death-bed of Edward is vividly portrayed by More; and it is possible that Brakenbury and Tyrrell were there. Richard, however, was in the north of England at the time preparing for a second expedition into Scotland. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of York were at Ludlow. The name of the Duke of Clarence is used by Brereton in mistake.

Page 4. "*A book of reason he had in his hand.*"

King Edward's attempts at reading futurity were tolerably successful, if the anecdote here narrated, and that connected with the fate of Clarence, who suffered on account of

"A prophecy which says that G
Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be,"

may be relied on.

Margaret of Burgundy dealt, like her royal brother, in the forbidden art, and is said by the chroniclers to have tormented Henry with her sorceries as much as by the two rebellions which she instigated.

Page 6. "*The Eagle's foot shoud be pulled down.*"

Three badges are given in this "Song" as worn by the house of Stanley; "the Eagle's foot," "the Eagle" and "the Hart's head."

The first is part of the Eagle and Child, the family crest, and was probably long the cognisance of the Lords Stanley, for Sir John Stanley, temp. Henry VIII., base son of the Bishop of Ely, composing his own arms from the coats of Stanley and of Lathom, bore, "Or three eagles' legs erased gules, on a chief indented azure three bucks' heads cabossed or, crest, on a wreath an eagle's head couped or, holding in the beak an eagle's leg and claws erased gules, unguled azure."—(Ormerod's Cheshire, vol. iii. p. 326.)

The "Harts' heads" are nearly allied to the "Bucks' heads cabossed," first assumed by the Stanleys as foresters of Wirral, and still the arms of the family. In 1631, the company of players attached to James Lord Strange wore for their badge the Spread Eagle, the charge on the arms of Tremouille, the family of Lady Strange, as appears in the title page of "Faire Em, the Miller's Daughter of Manchester." Upon the subject of badges there is the fragment of an excellent Essay in the Retrospective Review.

Page 7. "*He crowned thé with a crown of lead.*"

This termination has been adopted for the sake of the rhyme. Johnson, in a work upon the Jurisprudence of the Isle of Man, states (p. 11.) that "in the year 1393 William Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, sold the Isle of Man to Sir William Scroop, chamberlain to the King of England, as appears by the record, "Wilhelmus le Scroop emit de Domino Wilhelmo Montacuto Insulam Euboniæ id est Manniæ. Est nempe jus ipsius insulæ, ut quisquis illius sit Dominus Rex vocetur, cui etiam fas est corona aurea coronari.'"

Page 8. "*In Sandall Castle underneath a tree.*"

This castle, situated in the vicinity of Wakefield, belonged to

the Dukes of York, and had acquired some notoriety on account of its being the place near which Richard Duke of York lost his life, Dec. 31, 1459.

Page 8. "*Sir John Savage is your sister's son.*"

The John Savage here alluded to was the son of a knight of the same name, by Catherine the youngest sister of the Earl of Derby. The father appears to have absented himself from the battle of Bosworth; but Sir John Savage the younger acted a very conspicuous part upon that occasion, and was rewarded by considerable grants of forfeited estates, in the preambles to which King Henry sets forth the services which had been rendered to him. (Leycester's Antiquities, p. 232.) The intimacy between the two great families of Stanley and Savage does not appear to have been very durable; for in Queen Elizabeth's reign, Edward Earl of Derby writes to government to complain of the conduct of Edmond Savage, and adds, "he is not my lover, nor o^{r} auncestors have not byn lovers."

Sir John Savage was the progenitor of the Earls Rivers; he met his death at the siege of Boulogne, 8 Hen. VII. 1492, and lies buried in the chapel of his family in Macclesfield church. The name of his wife is not given by Leycester, although she left issue. Sir John had also some illegitimate children, and amongst others one George Savage, whose base son was the notorious Bishop Bonner.

Page 9. "*Gilbert Talbott is a captain pure.*"

Sir Gilbert Talbot, K.G., third son of John second Earl of Shrewsbury, who was slain at Northampton, 1460, fighting for

the House of Lancaster, to whose interests the Talbots appear to have been uniformly attached, was a renowned knight. Although Sir Gilbert had not the guardianship of his nephew the young Earl of Shrewsbury, yet he raised the tenantry of the family, and with them joined the Earl of Richmond at Newport. For his good services at Bosworth he was lavishly rewarded by Henry the Seventh.

Page 11. "*Did for my sister my Lady Wells and me.*"

Cicely, second daughter of Edward the Fourth, was by her father betrothed in infancy to the eldest son of the King of Scotland. This, with the other matrimonial projects which Edward indulged in favour of his daughters, never took effect, and the Princess Cicely became the wife of John Lord Wells, and had a daughter who died without issue. Lady Wells afterwards married "one Kyne," and died in poverty.

Page 13. "*They ate the spice and drank the wine.*"

An allusion to the liveries, meals which were disused early in Elizabeth's reign.

Page 13. "*In Latham Castle there he doth lye.*"

The castle of the Norman knight Sir Robert de Lathom gave place about the time of the "Song" to the house erected by his descendant Thomas second Lord Stanley. For nearly two centuries Lathom House was the court of the north-western district of England. It is foreign to the present inquiry to gather together all that is contained in books of easy reference respect-

ing this most interesting and princely residence. Mr. Roby of Rochdale has ingeniously attempted to give a view of the house as it was when it might have "lodged Kinges three," and when Richmond was built "like Lathom House in fashion." The gate-house is copied from Bishop Stanley's monument; there are the eagle's tower, and the nine inner, and nine outer towers, and the flat and uninteresting country, all set forth in Finden's best manner: but we still must indulge the hope, that either on wood or canvass, in some of the numerous old halls in Lancashire, there may exist a view of Lathom, before the sequestrators under Cromwell, weary of the slow disposal of the building materials by sale, invited the peasants of the hundred of West Derby to take away the stones and timbers without any charge.

In a note on Lathom, (Progresses: James I. vol. iii. p. 403.) Mr. Nicholls says, "I have been favoured by Mr. Ormerod, (from a MS. volume of poems relating to the Stanley family collected by him, and in his library,) with the following extracts from a metrical history of the Stanley family, composed by Thomas Stanley bishop of Man, who died in 1570; and a paraphrase of the same by R. G., who was chaplain to William Earl of Derby from 1672 to 1702. The latter is curious; but what it affirms must be entirely on traditional foundation, for the lines in Bishop Stanley's poem are but four." The extracts thus alluded to are given; but the editor omits to mention that the greater part of the verses relating to Lathom had already been published in Pennant's Tour from Downing to Alston Moor.

Bishop Stanley's poem is contained in Harl. MSS. 541; also in Cole's MSS. vol. 29. In the 59th volume of Cole's MSS. p. 323. et seq. the paraphrase of R. G. occurs: but by what authority Mr. Ormerod, or Mr. Nicholls, styles the person designated by these initials "chaplain to William Earl of Derby from 1672 to

1702," it would be difficult to discover: for in the Argument annexed to the Dedication of the Paraphrase, R. G. says: "And now William the sixth earl liveth, and is married to Elizabeth the daughter of Edward Earl of Oxenforde," which sixth earl died in 1642, and was great-grandfather to the ninth earl, William Richard George, who died 1702.

The criticism upon the lines respecting Lathom is equally unfortunate. R. G. does not profess to give these as a paraphrase of the bishop's "Lancashire rhymes;" but having concluded his original design, he proceeds to another poem, entitled "A most memorable Repetition of the Honours and Manners of the thrice noble Earl before named." As to the source from which R. G. obtained his information, it is sufficient to know that he was in habits of intercourse with the existing Earl of Derby; and that of the Stanleys there have more ballads been written than concerning any other house in the empire.

Page 14. "*From Latham to Manchester he road me by.*
Upon Salford bridge I turned my horse againe."

At this time the bridge over the Irwell separating Salford from Manchester was the nearest road from Lathom to London. On the occasion of the visit of Henry the Seventh to Lathom, Warrington bridge was built, which, after 1496, became the road from the South of Lancashire to London.

Page 15. "*I have found you a hart in Darnall Park.*"

Darnall or Dernhall is a manor in the Edisbury hundred, Cheshire, of which, in 1485, the Abbot of Vale Royal was the lord; and here that foundation had a grange and park.—(Ormerod's Cheshire, vol. ii. p. 98.)

Page 22. *"He was aware of the Warden and Edward Stanley."*

Dr. Hibbert, in the History of the Collegiate Church of Manchester, has collected all that Cole, Bentham, Fuller, Godwin and others, have said of James Stanley Bishop of Ely and Warden of Manchester. The date assigned by Hollingworth, 22nd July 1485, for this warden's succession to the church over which his great-uncle Archdeacon James Stanley had presided from the year 1481, is not inconsistent with Brereton's narrative. It is probable from the great age of the archdeacon, who died the year following, 1486, that he merely accepted the appointment until his kinsman was sufficiently old to take his place. That the two sons of the second Lord Stanley were employed as set forth in the ballad when Brereton arrived at Manchester to summon them, has nothing in it of improbability, although the messenger, in writing some years afterwards, might not be acquainted with the precise month on which the second James Stanley succeeded the first of that name. The date of the warden's preferment absolves the Countess of Richmond from the charge of having been his sole patroness.

Edward Stanley, the hero of Floddon, and afterwards Lord Monteagle, is here represented as the associate of priests; and from the reputation which in all metrical histories is conceded to him of being very learned, it may be conjectured that he was at first intended for a religious profession, although early betaking himself to more congenial pursuits. Upon Brereton's summons, Sir Edward followed his brother Lord Strange to London, and having there devoted himself to the service of the Princess Elizabeth, it is probable that, like Marmion, this knight was present both at Bosworth and at Floddon. Seacome says of him, that "the camp was his school, and his learning was a pike

and a sword. His Majesty's greeting to him whenever they met was, Ho! my Soldier! Honour floated in his veins, and valour danced in his spirits," &c. p. 46. Bishop Stanley, who was descended from Lord Monteagle, relates of the first advancement of his ancestor, a story which bears a suspicious resemblance to that assigned to the founder of the house of Russel Dukes of Bedford.

"His second soone Edward was married to an heire
A thousand markes by yeare of good lande and faire:
His playing on instruments was a good noyse,
His singing as excellent with a sweet voice;
His countenance comelie, with visage demure,
Not moovinge, ne streininge, but steadfast and sure;
He would shew in a single recorde pype,
As many partes as in a bagpype.
When the King of Castell was driven hither,
By foarce and violence of wyndie wether,
He brought with him five were their musitiens,
There was no better in their opinions.
The King of Castell said their actes were so abell,
They were gentlemen of howses notable.
I have, quoth Henerie the Seventh, a knight my servant,
One of the greatest earles soones in all my land,
He plays of all instruments, none comes amisse,
Called Sir Edward Stanley: Loo, Sir, where he is;
Come nearre, good Sir Edward Stanley, quoth the Kinge,
For the honour of us shewe part of your cunninge.
He stoode before the Kinge,—doubtlesse this was true,
In a faire gowne of cloath of gould and tissue,
Lyke noe common mynstrell to shewe taverne mirthe,
But lyke a nobleman both of land and of birth.

Hee showde such cooninge these two Kings before,
That th' other had noe liste to play any more:
Hee played upon all instruments notable well.
But of all things mased the King of Castell,
To heere two partes in a single recorder;
That was beyond all their estimations farre:
And then King Henery made him blow his horne.

* * * * *

Hee had more qualities like a gentleman
Then in all his time had anie other man;
And for his hardinesse to say truth and right,
He was a stout man and a valyant knight."

The "thousand marks a year" were, according to Dr. Whitaker, (Whalley, p. 476. Richmondshire, p. 255.) obtained "by a combination of treachery and cruelty, not often exceeded in the stories of ancient tragedy." Sir Edward Stanley is accused by Dr. Whitaker of murdering the male heir of the family of Harrington of Hornby Castle, in order to secure the inheritance to his second wife the daughter of Sir John Harrington. The evidence upon which this accusation rests, is an unintelligible letter of the "Parson of Slaitburn," who was cotemporary with Lord Monteagle, fortified by the authority of Seacome, who says that this Lord held "the materiality and physical mortality of the soul." The inference of Dr. Whitaker is not, upon his own showing, sufficiently supported; and with respect to the ownership of Hornby, it appears at the time in question to have belonged neither to Harrington nor Monteagle; for Thomas second Earl of Derby states in his will, (proved 27th June 1524,) "My uncle Sir Edward Stanley knight, Lord Monteagle, enjoyed of my gift and grant, the castle and demesnes of Hornby Castle, and

other manors, for the special love, trust, and kindness I then found and supposed he had to me, which lands he held on conditions,—I will, that for the great unkindness I have since found, and do find in my uncle, and for that he has not observed, or performed the said conditions, he shall have none of the rents or profits thereof, but that the said gifts, grants, &c. be null and none effect." In Lord Monteagle's will, (proved 25th August 1524,) no notice is taken of the above direction, and the testator appoints a constable to "my Castle of Hornby."—(Testamenta Vetusta, p. 589, 601.)

Page 24. "*The young Earle of Shrewsbury.*"

George Talbot fourth Earl of Shrewsbury, was the son of John the third Earl, who died suddenly at Coventry 1473, aged twenty-five, and left by Catherine his wife, sister to Henry Stafford Duke of Buckingham, who was beheaded at Salisbury by Richard the Third, two sons; George, four years of age at the time of his father's death, and Thomas, who died young.

The young Earl of Shrewsbury was the ward of Lord Hastings, and is made the subject of a remarkable provision in his guardian's will.—(Hunter's Hallamshire, p. 48. Testamenta Vetusta, p. 372.)

Page 25. "*I have been in the West, my Lord,*
There born and bred was I."

The words "in Cheshire," are written on the margin opposite the last of these lines, in the same handwriting as the rest of the MS.

Page 27. *" But in the subburbs without the city*
An ould inn chosen hath hee."

In another ballad respecting this Earl of Derby, we find that

" He built in London a faire house,
Little below Paule's Chaine;
And when the sicknes caus'd his Honor
To forsake the Citty,
Callum, or Gadsdaine, were receits,
Or Holborne, very fitly."

Page 32. *" Without all doubt at Liverpoole,*
He took shipping upon the sea."

The obscurity of this port naturally recommended it to Brereton. There was no portion of the island so little known at this time, and for a century afterwards, as the north-western coast. On the 26th October 1571, the Bishop of Ross being examined respecting the attempted escape of the Queen of Scots, states that, "after in the wynter the said Owen came to examinate, and brought a great map of Ingland with hym, and there shewed hym that from Chattisworth there was an easy conveying of hir to the West Seas, as beyng not ten myles off." (Murdin's State Papers, p. 21.) In Barker's confession, September 19, 1571, it is mentioned, "that they had a device to carie the Quene of Scotts away to the sea side, and then to have a shippe redy about Lyrpole, or some such place in Lancashire."—(p. 99.)

Liverpool was, however, well known to the dependants of the house of Stanley; for not only did this port share with Wyre water the traffic with the Isle of Man, but here the Stanleys had

a tower, in which from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century they occasionally resided.

Page 32. "*To Beggrammes Abbey in Litle Brittain.*"

It is not difficult, after making allowance for the various MSS. through which the name of this abbey must have passed since it was set down by Brereton, to conjecture that Begars, and not Beggrammes, is the place alluded to. "Begars Abbaye," says M. Ogée, "dit 'le petit Citeaux,' située dans le territoire de Guenegan, à trois lieues et demie au sud sud ouest de Treguier son eveché, et à 28 lieues et de miede Rennes. Ces Religieux ainsi encouragés se deciderent à demeurer sur les terres du Comte de Ponthievre, et choisèrent la solitude de Plus Coat, habitée ci devant par un hermite nommé Begar, qui a donné son nom à cette abbaye fondée le 10 Nov. 1130." A very similar derivation is given by Piganiol de la Force. (Tom. v. p. 152.) "Cet etablissement se fit dans la solitude de *Plus-Coat*, ou il y avoit deja un ermite, à cause du quel cette abbaye a pris le nom de Begars, car on appelloit les Ermites Begars, mot Anglois qui signifie Mendians." The establishment thus alluded to is not only situated conveniently for intercourse with England, but was in close connection with a religious foundation upon the banished Earl's estates. In Tanner's Notitia, the Abbey of Begare in Brittany is said to have had several estates in England, particularly in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, *there was a cell of alien monks of this Abbey fixed near Richmond*, temp. Hen. III. which upon the suppression of foreign houses was granted first to the Chantry of St. Ann at Thirsk, then to Eton College, then to the Priory of Mountgrace, and at last to Eton College again.

Having thus endeavoured to show that Beg'ars was the place visited by Brereton, we shall proceed to hazard a supposition as to the precise time at which the trusty Esquire met the King there. Of the proceedings of Henry whilst in banishment, little is known; and from 1471 to 1484, with the exception of the treaties of which he was the object, the notice of him by Comines will probably comprise all that can be said. "La pluspart de sa vie avoit esté prisonnier et mesmement en Bretagne, és mains du Duc Francois, qui l'avoit bien traité pour prisonnier." Buck confirms this by a quotation from Froissart; but as that writer's Chronicles terminate with the year 1400, and as he was dead before 1450, the use of his name upon this subject is absurd.

The conduct of Richard failed to induce Francis of Bretagne to treat his overtures with the scorn which even the selfish Louis XI. manifested towards the usurper; yet Henry soon felt that the surveillance under which to satisfy Edward he had been hitherto held, was much less strict; and by degrees the Duke not only interested himself in the fate of his prisoner, but assisted him in the attempt which he made to join Buckingham. In October 1484, Henry returned to Vannes; and Richard, after attainting him of treason, sent ambassadors to Brittany, offering to the Duke the possessions of Richmond, (the title connected with which was assumed by the House of Bretagne until it became lost in that of France,) on condition that the Earl was delivered into his hands. It is unnecessary to examine the precise circumstances under which Henry fled into Anjou. Buck, as usual, differs in his account from all other writers. It is certain that the Duke disclaimed the intended treachery, and made every atonement in his power to the Earl. The King of France received the fugitive in the month of June 1485, being then on a progress, and in August the battle of Bosworth was fought. The

presence of the Earl of Oxford at Beg'ars, who escaped from Hammes about the end of June, limits the time in which Brereton could have seen him with the King to the three first weeks in July 1485. The conduct of Francis throughout marks an anxious but timid friend; and that Henry had some strong and hitherto undiscovered reasons for attachment to the Duke is evident, from the assistance England afterwards afforded to him against France, and which Monstrelet, Bellay, and other French writers, stigmatize as ungrateful towards their King. There is, therefore, nothing improbable in the supposition, that previous to embarkation Henry made a secret visit to the place in which he expected to find communications from his friends; and no one can read the description given in the "Song," of the person of Richmond and of the mode in which he received the messenger, and doubt that the writer might truly say of the scenes he describes,

"quorum pars magna fui."

Page 35. "*And the Earle of Oxford was him nee.*"

The wars of York and Lancaster furnish a gloomy record of treachery and cruelty; and we find the ferocious spirit in which the work of extermination was carried on, seldom relieved by those graceful and chivalrous traits in which the history of the civil wars of other countries abound. One of the rare instances of consistency amidst the profligacy of the age in question, is furnished in the life of the thirteenth Earl of Oxford, who well deserved the panegyric contained in his family motto, "Vero nihil Verius."

The Veres were originally Lancastrians; and although the twelfth Earl of Oxford gave a somewhat uncertain support to

that interest, his adhesion was sufficiently decided to hasten his fate. "In the which parliament," says Hall, (1 Edw. IV. 1461,) "the Erle of Oxford farre stricken in age, and the Lord Awbrey Veer his sonne and heire, were attainted and put to execution, which caused Ihon Erle of Oxford ever after to rebell." Headingham Castle, the family residence, was at this time visited by the emissaries of the King, and some of the servants arrested; and John Vere, who on the death of his father and brother would otherwise have succeeded to the title and estate, was attainted and thrown into prison.

For several years the name of the young Earl does not occur. It may be supposed that the machinations of Warwick against Edward were anxiously watched by Oxford, who soon after his escape bound himself by an additional motive of attachment to the cause of the "King maker," in a marriage with the Lady Margaret Neville, the sister of that turbulent nobleman. In 1470, Oxford joined Queen Margaret at Amboyse, and in November of that year availed himself of the temporary success of the Lancastrians to obtain relief from the attaint to which both his title and estate had been subjected. The mother of Lord Oxford was of the family of Howard; and in receiving the lieutenancy of Norfolk and Essex, he found the Yorkists, by the advice of his kinsman the Duke of Norfolk, who under Edward had borne absolute sway in those parts, anxious to transfer to a new and more powerful patron the services which in these unsettled times were ever at the disposal of the predominant party. "The Duke and Duchess," writes John Paston, 11th October 1470, "sue to him as humbly as ever I did to them, insomuch that my Lord of Oxford shall have the rule of them and theirs by their own desires and great means."

Amongst the numerous acts of treachery by which Warwick's

ruin was achieved, there is not one chargeable upon Lord Oxford; whilst the brother of the great Earl connived at the escape of Edward from Middleham, assisted as the monarch then was (although Lady Bessy does not mention it,) by Sir William Stanley, whose brother Lord Stanley had married Warwick's sister; whilst Lord Stanley was in arms against the Nevilles; whilst Clarence the Earl's son-in-law deserted him on the eve of battle; whilst Marquis Montacute allowed Edward to march to London,—John Earl of Oxford, from the 19th of March 1470–1, when he summoned his followers to meet him "on Friday next coming at Newark," to oppose Edward who had landed, to the conclusion of the battle of Barnet, carried himself with uniform fidelity and courage. At the close of that engagement Oxford fled into Wales; and without staying to witness the disastrous field of Tewksbury, proceeded into France, where two years afterwards he had, with the assistance of supplies from England, collected at Dieppe twelve ships. With this fleet, 28th May 1473, he landed at St. Osyth, Essex, but soon re-embarked. In November 1473, Oxford was besieged in St. Michael's Mount, the place at which many years afterwards he took the Lady Katharine Gordon, the wife of Perkin Warbeck. Here, after enduring a siege of some weeks, the Earl capitulated, and obtained his life probably at the intercession of the Howards, although on condition of enduring a perpetual imprisonment in the Castle of Hammes in Picardy. The Earl's only child was sent to the Tower, where he died; and his Countess, connected in the nearest relationship with the greatest and most prosperous families, was reduced to the necessity of earning a livelihood by her needle.

According to a letter from Sir John Paston, 23rd August 1478, Oxford endeavoured to escape from his prison. "Item, as to the pageant that men say that the Earl of Oxford hath played at

Hammes, I suppose ye have heard thereof, it is so long ago. I was not in this country when the tidings came, therefore I sent you no word thereof; but for conclusion, as I hear say, he leaped the walls and went to the dyke, and into the dyke to the chin, to what intent I cannot tell: some say to steal away, and some think he would have drowned himself; and so it is deemed."

The following passage from Polydore Vergil gives the best account of the mode in which Oxford was finally relieved from his imprisonment, and in June 1485 joined Richmond at Montargis. "Dum hic Henricus moratur, Ioannes Comes Oxoniensis, quem suprà ab Edouardo diximus in arce Hammo custodiâ teneri, unà cum Jacobo Bluntio loci præfecto, et Ioanni Fortescuto equite, qui oppidi Caleti portas custodiebat, ab ipso subornatis, ad illum venit.

"Henrico viso Comite, incredibilem cepit lætitiam, quòd homo magnæ nobilitatis, scientiæque in bello, et integerrimæ fidei, suarum partium studiosissimus, tandem vinculis, Dei nutu, solutus, in tempore tam opportune sibi venisset auxilio, in quo tutius, quam in quocunque alio spes suas ponere, atque ipse acquiescere posset. Namque alios qui Edouardi partium fuissent, non utique eum fugiebat, pro mala temporum conditione in suam fidem venisse, hunc autem qui toties pro Henrico Sexto pugnasset, putabat cœlesti ope ea custodia liberatum, ut haberet hominem suæ factionis, cui tutò omnia crederet, ac idcirco ob adventum Oxoniensis immortaliter gavisus, cœpit de rebus suis melius sperare."—(Lib. 25.)

The Earl of Oxford was conspicuous by his valour at Bosworth, where he fought in the van of Henry's army, and received at the hands of that monarch those rewards which he was not parsimonious in bestowing upon the Lancastrians. The Countess of Oxford survived her husband's return, and seems to

have shared with him the pleasure of dispensing the ancient and magnificent hospitalities of the family of Vere. The Earl was left a widower late in life, and married a second time to Elizabeth daughter of Sir Richard Scroope and widow of William Lord Beaumont. The only child of Lord Oxford died, as we have noticed, in the Tower; and this truly great nobleman was himself gathered to his ancestors at Headingham Castle, on the 10th of March 1512.

Page 35. "*The Lord Ferris wou'd not him beguile truely.*"

Lord Ferrers of Groby is better known under the name of Sir Thomas Grey Marquis of Dorset. This nobleman was the son of Queen Elizabeth by a marriage with Lord Ferrers of Groby, who was slain at St. Albans, 39 Hen. VI. The Marquis, with the other Lords of the Queen's party, was attainted, 1 Ric. III. but escaping the fate of his grandfather, uncle, and brothers, Dorset first took sanctuary, and afterwards fled to Richmond. When his mother was persuaded to confide in Richard, the Marquis suddenly left Paris with an intention of proceeding to London: Henry, however, prevented the consummation of this treachery, and securing his unworthy associate, hastened the embarkation of his soldiers.

Page 38. "*Sir Rees ap Thomas a knight of Wales certain.*"

The name of Sir Rice ap Thomas "the Great" is here selected from the list of personages equally "ever wise, valiaunt, and fortunat," given by Brereton in common with the chroniclers, in order to express a hope that so important a document as the MS. Life of Sir Rice, which is analysed in the Retrospective Re-

view, (vol. xi.) may be given to the world entire, bearing as it does upon one of the darkest periods of English history.

Page 43. "*The Red Rose and the Blew Boar.*"

The Blue Boar is here set down in mistake for the "blanc sanglier," the cognisance of Richard. The blue boar was the ordinary badge of the House of Vere; although, according to Biondi, the Earl of Oxford's followers wore "a starre rounded with rayes," and were mistaken by their own side for King Edward's retainers, that monarch's badge being "the sunne."

THE END.

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